

MONARCHY

By the Same Author

THE HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT

THE LIFE OF GEORGE CANNING

MUSSOLINI

THE JACOBITE MOVEMENT

MONARCHY

BY

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*“ Il Rè, simbolo della Patria, simbolo della
perpetuità della Patria.”—MUSSOLINI.*

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MONARCHY

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Chapter I

The Implication of Monarchy

“**I** SUPPOSE the country isn't ripe for a republic yet,” is a remark too frequently made of any nation still governed by a hereditary monarchy. Those who express such sentiments, in so far as they think at all, take it for granted that monarchical government is a half-way house between anarchy and a republic, and that a King is an anachronism of which any civilized community in the twentieth century must necessarily be ashamed. If the speaker be English he or she will make an exception of the British monarchy, for the popular press and socialistically-minded pedagogues have instilled into the average Englishman the belief that the King of England is by the Constitution a mere rubber-stamp; as he cannot do any harm he may as well be allowed to exist, for it is convenient to have a Court at which *débutantes* may be presented, and a Royal Family to open public institutions. For the rest, monarchs and monarchies are obviously things of the past, and the sooner they, and the reactionary militarists, scheming Jesuits, and loose women who are their inevitable concomitants, are abolished, the better for the happiness of mankind.

Undeniably this is the attitude of a great many otherwise intelligent people at the present time, and the extraordinary thing is that no insignificant proportion of them are very definitely to the Right in party politics. Hereditary monarchy since the war has come to be regarded as a lost cause, and, in many circles, for a man to proclaim

himself a Royalist is to invite the same condescending pity from his fellows that would be extended to him were he to advocate the abolition of mechanical transport or to maintain that the earth is flat. When Spain made her second trial of republicanism in April, 1931, the British Conservative Press, while paying a tribute to the patriotism of King Alfonso, and to the work which he had done for sufferers in the war, quite obviously believed that in discarding a monarchy for a republic the Spaniards had given proof of a progressive spirit. It never for a moment occurred to them that what had happened was that Spain had gone back, not forward, and that the establishment of a republic was merely the natural consequence of such retrogression.

This standpoint is, of course, almost wholly due to the fixed belief of the modern world that progress must necessarily be uninterrupted and that all changes are for the good. After all, our grandfathers travelled in coaches, while we ride in motor-cars, and they had neither wireless nor aeroplanes, so it is but natural that we should be superior to them in other ways. We have progressed from the ape in the forest to the robot in the suburb, and to suggest that there can be any looking back now is an insult to the dignity of man. From this it follows that when any survival from the past is discarded, it is a sign of progress. If our forebears, after the nightmare of the Dark Ages, settled down under hereditary monarchy, it was because they knew no better, just as they admired Van Dyck and Velasquez because they were unacquainted with the superior excellence of the Futurists. Since 1918 this contempt for the legacy of the past has been increasingly more pronounced,¹ and the desire to hail "new dawns," to

¹ "Our life . . . can find no direction from the past. It has to discover its own destiny." José Ortega y Gasset: *La Rebelión de las Masas*, p. 51 (English edition).

begin "new eras," and to turn over "new pages" has become almost feverish. Because we can move over the ground more quickly than our forefathers, therefore we are wiser than they, and when we overthrow the forms of government they set up it is a sign of progress.

Only slightly less illogical is the attitude of those who maintain that a monarchy may suit one country and a republic another; in short, that there is no such thing as absolute good in these matters. In so far as it is impossible to devise a constitution that will suit all nations this is true, but a hereditary monarchy may flourish under a multitude of forms. Persia is, in fact, if not in name, an autocracy, Japan an oligarchy, Italy a Corporate State, and Great Britain and Belgium are democracies, but they are all subject to a hereditary monarch, and it would hardly be seriously suggested that they would fare better as republics. To say that autocracy, for example, is capable of successful universal application would hardly be a tenable proposition, for although it may be a necessity in Russia, it is difficult to see how it could be applied in Great Britain or France: similarly, a theocracy would presuppose unanimity in religious matters, and where this was absent such a form of government could hardly succeed. Hereditary monarchy, however, does not fall within this category, for it does not depend upon any particular type of constitution, and it can therefore be adapted to different national needs. To maintain that it may suit one people, but not another, is absurd; it is as if one were to hold that railways may be a blessing to one people and a curse to another. It is possible to argue that railways are better run by individual enterprise, by public utility companies, or by the State, but of their absolute usefulness there can be no question. So it is with hereditary monarchy: it may be advisable, according to local requirements, for it to be limited or absolute in its power, but only those who are

unacquainted with, or wilfully blind to, the lessons of history are likely to regard its utility as merely relative.

The eclipse of hereditary monarchy always coincides with an era of retrogression and chaos.¹ Of this history contains innumerable examples. In France the Crown was at its weakest during the reigns of the last Valois and during the minority of Louis XIV, just as it was in England while Henry VI was on the throne, and it is agreed that the period of the Wars of Religion and of the Fronde in the case of the one country, and of the Wars of the Roses in that of the other, was not the most illustrious in the national annals, while the Commonwealth brought Britain to the verge of economic ruin. Since 1918 there has been a wholesale exchange of monarchies for republics, and with definitely disastrous consequences, for the last fourteen years have been the most unsettled that Europe has known since the days of the French Revolution, when the principle of hereditary monarchy was also called in question. The reason for this is not far to seek. In a republic the factions have free play, and in their embittered strife they waste the national resources at home and perpetuate the feeling of insecurity abroad. Moreover, under a republican regime there is a complete lack of continuity, and the mischief which this can produce in the international sphere was shown in 1932, when, in spite of

¹ Cf. the warning of Montrose: "And you, ye meaner people of Scotland. . . . Do ye not know, when the monarchical government is shaken, the great ones strive for the garland with your blood and your fortunes? Whereby you gain nothing; but, instead of a race of Kings who have governed you two thousand years with peace and justice, and have preserved your liberties against all domineering nations, shall purchase to yourselves vultures and tigers to reign over your posterity; . . . the kingdom fall again into the hands of one who of necessity must, and for reason of State will, tyrannize over you. For kingdoms acquired by blood and violence are by the same means retained." M. Napier: *Memoirs of Montrose*, vol. i, p. 288.

the need for an early decision with regard to several pressing problems, nothing could be effected owing to the necessity of awaiting the result of elections, first in one country and then in another.

If the general state of the world has been disturbed of late years when hereditary monarchy has been in abeyance, the individual countries that have either expelled their Kings, or have reduced them to impotence, have shared the same fate. Germany, Austria, Russia, and Portugal, to name but four, have reached the very nadir of their fortunes under republican administration, while in Great Britain, where the power of the Crown had never been reduced so low as during the years that immediately followed the Armistice, crisis succeeded crisis until the very foundations of the State were shaken. One consequence of this has been the abandonment of democracy in favour of dictatorship, but by itself the latter form of government can only secure temporary benefits. Mankind cannot be permanently governed by the sword, and it is in such countries as Italy, where the dictator has been careful to enlist in his service the traditions inherent in hereditary monarchy, that the greatest progress has been made. It is a notable fact in the post-war era that the more truly a country is republican the worse it has fared, and in the United States, where there is no respect at all for tradition, there has been a complete collapse of society.

It is customary to blame the war for the troubles of the last decade, but such an accusation will not bear investigation; the culprit is uncontrolled democracy. Alike in Great Britain, France, and Germany,¹ government by the *bourgeois* parties has only been tolerated on condition that these pursued a Socialist policy, and it is this, not the

¹ Owing to the accession of Fascism to power within four years of the Armistice, Italy was spared the worst excesses of post-war democracy.

war, that has undermined modern civilization. The understanding has been tacit rather than avowed, and when the ordinary elector of the Right voted for his party he had no idea, as a rule, that he was supporting his political opponents. This has naturally introduced an atmosphere of chicanery into post-war politics that is quite unparalleled, and it is a significant fact that the chief of the so-called statesmen of the period have been those who have carried out a Left programme while professing to be themselves men of the Right.¹ As if this were not enough, such an essentially dishonest attitude has actually been acclaimed as proof of the highest statesmanship. In these circumstances it is little wonder that there has been no break upon the Socialist wheel, and the watchdogs have joined the wolves in preying upon the sheep.

Had there been monarchs in Berlin and Paris during this time, and had the power of the British monarchy not been temporarily in abeyance, such a state of affairs would have been impossible. Royalist Europe settled the financial problems that resulted from the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, which, incidentally, lasted not four and a half, but twenty-three, years, at two conferences, and within four years of the last shot being fired at Waterloo the whole question of reparations was at an end. Democracy is likewise responsible for the failure of Europe effectively to disarm. Every soldier knows that the present French army is neither more nor less than a half-trained militia, of which the fighting value is extremely low. If the Duc de Guise were restored to the throne he would undoubtedly reduce it to half its size, and make it a professional force, thereby setting an example of practical disarmament which the rest of the world would have to follow. The politicians of the Third Republic dare not do this, although it would enormously increase the efficiency

¹ Baldwin, Brüning, and Tardieu are notable examples.

of the army, because they know that the creation of a professional force would spell the end of the present regime. If there were no such thing as a republic to be found upon the map the outlook for disarmament would be considerably brighter.

At the present time there is a school of thought which, while holding that the day of democracy is past, believes that monarchy, in the etymological sense, rather than hereditary kingship, is the form of government most suited to the needs of the twentieth century. That a dictatorship is probably the only effective method of repairing the evil wrought by democratic administration is true, but the whole of human history goes to show that a dictatorship is generally a temporary expedient. Very few of the Greek tyrannies lasted more than one generation, and none, in Greece itself, survived the second; while in mediæval Italy it was only those dictators who succeeded in founding a new hereditary monarchy who managed to hand on their power. In modern times two French Empires have collapsed in the lifetime of their founders, and there are few of the existing dictatorships which are likely to survive those who called them into being. Such a state of affairs is but natural, for the dictator is called in for a specific purpose, generally to restore order after a period of anarchy, and when this has been accomplished there is no further need for his services. *Mutatis mutandis* his position is the same as that of the Greek tyrant who "rested on the will of the immature Demos, not on established law. . . . When circumstance, or the will, changed, his commission was ended, and he never had the bedrock of a loyal nobility, nor the social and religious sanction which that can give."¹ One can do anything with bayonets except sit upon them.

The Romans realized clearly both the advantages and

¹ Cf. *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. iii, p. 549.

the disadvantages of a dictatorship, and so they provided for the creation of one in a perfectly legal manner, but for a fixed period. The modern world has not faced facts quite so openly as a general rule, but government by decree has been adopted in several countries when, as in Germany, the Parliamentary System has broken down. The case for a dictatorship in times of crisis can hardly be overstated, and it has been very well put by a recent writer: "It is a sane instinct which leads nations in difficulties to turn their backs on democracy and all its works. For democracy is a fair-weather system only, impossible in times of storm and stress. The essence of good government, of the kind that stands a strain, is responsibility; which means that a man who holds authority must answer for his sins and have his blunders brought home to him. Under our system of political democracy ultimate authority is vested in the entirely irresponsible, the elector; for what emperor, what dictator, however despotic, can err as the elector errs, with complete immunity from consequence? Who will take him to task if he votes corruptly, in selfishness, if he votes in folly or in ignorance? Who will even know when he has voted like a fool? The secrecy of the ballot-box protects him from the modicum, the tiny modicum of blame that might fall to his share, as adherent of a party which had brought disaster on the country. And other method of bringing home error there is none. The dictator, grown intolerable, can be knifed or shot; but you cannot assassinate the anonymous, million-headed voter. The dictator, too, however autocratic, will probably have some thought for his reputation, while alive and at the bar of history, a consideration which need not trouble the anonymous, million-headed voter."¹

The need for dictators in existing circumstances does not, however, mean that they can take the place of the

¹ Cicely Hamilton: *Modern Italy*, pp. 225-226.

hereditary monarch, for they are his complement, not his substitute. When the time comes for the dictatorship to terminate, the King is there to supervise the change to some other form of government, and by his presence to ensure that there is no violent breach of continuity. As has already been said, it is one of the peculiar virtues of hereditary monarchy that it does not depend upon any one form of government. A King can work very well with a dictator, as in Italy,¹ or with the Parliamentary System, as in Belgium,² always provided that those with whom he is called upon to act put the national interest first: otherwise there can be no place for him, for although a usurper or a tyrant may become the tool of a faction, a hereditary monarch cannot do so without denying everything for which he stands. A government exercising power in the interests of one section of the population is the negation of true kingship, and with such a government no monarch worth the name can co-operate.

Those, then, who declare that in dictatorship lies the only hope of the world to-day may very well be right, but that does not mean that there is no place for monarchy. What is essential is that the King and the dictator should work together for the common good, for if there is to be a pull-devil, pull-baker struggle between them, as there was in Spain between King Alfonso and General Primo de Rivera, then that national interest will suffer which it is the duty of both to safeguard. Dictatorship without monarchy is always a risky experiment, both for the governor and for the governed, unless the dictator, like Lenin, is avowedly ruling in the interest of a minority, the members of which he has taken care to place in all

¹ Fascism is not, however, dictatorial government in the ordinary sense, but *cf.* Chap. VI, *passim*.

² For a critical account of the constitutional position of the Crown in Belgium *cf.* H. Speyer: *La Réforme de l'Etat en Belgique*.

the key-positions in the State: in that case he may retain power for a considerable period, though to the detriment of the majority of those over whom he bears sway.

"People," wrote Burke,¹ "will not look forward to posterity who never look backward to their ancestors," and of this national tradition a hereditary monarch is the outward and visible form. He is the embodiment of the nation, whose interests it is his peculiar duty to safeguard against those of the various political parties. Only a monarch who can look back upon a long line of kingly ancestors, and who aspires to hand on his crown to his son, can feel for his people in this way. A president, however just a man he may be, is but the nominee of a faction, and a republican regime has never yet become identified with the country in which it exists; after a life of over sixty years the Third Republic is still a very long way from being synonymous with France.² No elected ruler can feel that the people are his children in the way that a King can feel it; for the former they can never cease to be his fellow-citizens, and those of them who have assisted him to his high office are naturally dearer to him than the others. When, for example, King George refers to "my people," he is giving expression to a sentiment which no president can possibly share, and without which any nation must be the poorer.

A hereditary monarch will guard his people against the encroachments of factions which are desirous of utilizing the national resources for their own ends. A great many of the misfortunes that have befallen the world during the past fifteen years have been due to an exaggerated nationalism, and to a determination not to compromise upon any point, however trivial. In the days before Europe made the acquaintance of democracy these evils

¹ *Reflections on the French Revolution.*

² Cf. W. L. Middleton: *The French Political System*, pp. 31-32.

were unknown in their present form. National Kings represent nationality, not nationalism, and until the French Revolution there was not the bitterness among the nations that there is to-day. Democracy is the negation of true internationalism, and there was more cosmopolitanism in the eighteenth century, and even in the Middle Ages,¹ than there is in the twentieth, in spite of all the international conferences that are continually taking place. It is impossible to say how far the embittered nationalism of the present age is due to deliberate manipulation by vested interests, though it is clear that, like Frankenstein, they have now found that the monster they have created has become a menace. There was room in the world for Louis XIV at Versailles and Kang Hsi at Peking, but nationalism has made it too narrow for such a state of affairs to exist to-day.

Then, again, it is more than a coincidence that during these last years, when monarchy has been in abeyance, every nation has been a prey to the most violent internal convulsions. What has happened, of course, has been that the factions have got out of hand, and the ordinary citizen has been the sufferer. Exactly the same thing happened in the Middle Ages, when the excesses of baronial licence had to be repressed by the Crown: in the twentieth century organized Capital and organized Labour have taken the place of the barons, and in too many countries there has been no Crown to bring them to reason. It is one of the fallacies of democracy that the interest of a nation is the sum of the interests of the individuals that compose it. Experience has shown that nothing could in reality be further from the truth, and the attempt to act upon it has caused disaster.²

¹ Cf. C. Maurras: *Kiel et Tanger*, p. 328.

² "Il secolo 'liberale' dopo avere accumulato un' infinità di nodi gordiani, cerca di scioglierli con l'ecatombe della guerra mon-

Unfortunately, a great deal of unnecessary damage has been done owing to the success of the factions in spreading the belief that their violence was in some mysterious way actually beneficial. What was termed "the free play of political forces" was adopted as a doctrine, and was accepted long after all belief in its natural corollary, *laissez-faire* in matters of trade, had been abandoned. Why, incidentally, it should be justifiable to regulate the economic and social activities of man in the interest of the State, but reprehensible to interfere with his political activities for the same purpose, it is not easy to understand, but this distinction has been universally accepted in democratic countries since the war. Nor is this all, for faction has been glorified retrospectively, and the feudal magnates who compelled John to sign that essentially "class" document, Magna Carta, appear in the textbooks in English schools as high-minded and pure-souled patriots who thought only of the day when their action should be cited as a precedent for the introduction of universal suffrage. This glorification in the press, from the pulpit, and on the platform, of all and every type of rebellion has not made the task of government any easier, for if the revolutionaries of old are to be extolled as heroes, why should their spiritual descendants be sent to prison? Only hereditary monarchy, which stands for authority and tradition, can supply the corrective, for it is based upon principles which can make no appeal save to the most patriotic of parties.

It is also difficult to believe that the ordinary statesman is not considerably the better, when in office, for the advice of a monarch, whose training and experience give him a great advantage when any fresh problem comes up for consideration. If this was so in the past, when

diale." Benito Mussolini: *La Dottrina del Fascismo*, *Enciclopedia Italiana*, vol. xiv.

ministers were drawn from a class which had always been accustomed to public life, it is more so to-day, when the majority of those who hold high office have not been trained to politics. A King can cite precedents, and can adduce arguments, which would otherwise not be recalled until it was too late, and, in any event, he is likely to take a much wider view than his ministers. It is true that a wise President could do much the same, but republics prefer to elect nonentities to their highest executive office, and if, by any chance, a Solon did manage to get there he could never speak with the authority of a hereditary monarch, for his ministers would all remember him as a combatant in the political arena with themselves. M. Poincaré was certainly the ablest President that the Third Republic has had, and yet how complete was his impotence is clearly revealed in his autobiography. He was never able to influence the policy of France in the way that King George, King Victor Emmanuel, and King Albert have been able to influence that of their respective countries.

Furthermore, the average minister of to-day is tending to become more and more of a specialist. This tendency has not yet made itself felt in France, where the old democratic theory that any politician can do anything still holds, and it is only beginning to be noticeable in England, but elsewhere it will soon be the order of the day, more particularly since the Corporate State appears likely to be the solution that the twentieth century will find for its difficulties. In this case it will be more than ever necessary that the head of the State should be, not a transient phantom, but someone capable of co-ordinating the opinions of these specialist ministers to the national advantage. In short, he must be a specialist too, a specialist in statesmanship, trained to his job—that is to say, a hereditary monarch. Democracy distrusts the specialist until things

go wrong, and then it proceeds to worship him as a god, whose dictates must unhesitatingly be obeyed. Monarchy is wiser, for it keeps the specialist ever at its elbow, but never allows him to get the bit between his teeth, or to persuade the public that his pet theory is a panacea.

The proof of a pudding is in the eating, and to apply this adage to international politics is to ask whether, not only the world as a whole, but its component parts, have been any the happier for the fall of the monarchs. What exactly, for instance, has France gained by the adoption of a republican regime for the third time? Does she count for any more in the counsels of Europe, is her public life any cleaner, or are her citizens any happier, than if the Most Christian King were reigning in Paris? The stormy and chequered career of the German Republic hardly encourages the belief that the Reich is better for the absence of an Emperor, or its constituent members for that of their particular dynasties. The collapse of the Hapsburg monarchy was hailed as heralding the dawn of a new era in what had previously been the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and yet the world's statesmen have ever since been toiling in vain to find some solution of the problem of the Succession States. What benefits has republican government conferred upon Spain, Portugal, Brazil, or Greece? Is it not possible that the existence of a monarchy at Washington might have done something to arrest the social and moral disintegration of the United States? These are all questions which must be answered by the democrat before he can claim to have refuted the charge that the advent of republicanism represents anything but a retrograde step in the history of mankind.

In Great Britain the establishment of a republic has happily been avoided, but for years the monarchy was deliberately pushed by the politicians into the background, and the results can hardly be said to have been beneficial

to the man-in-the-street. The national resources were squandered in such a way that bankruptcy was only avoided with the greatest difficulty; in a world bristling with arms the armaments of Britain were reduced to a level far below that which safety demanded; and so weak a front was shown to rebellion in Ireland, that in all parts of the Empire sedition became the order of the day. In spite of the unprecedented expenditure of money, neither the happiness of the individual nor the efficiency of the administration was increased, while the number of unemployed rose to an unparalleled figure. In effect, when judged by results democracy is proved to have been a failure, and although this is not an argument for absolute monarchy, it does show that when the power of the Crown is in abeyance the fortunes of the subject reach their nadir.

The present is an age of materialism, and it is well that the materialistic spirit should not triumph in every sphere of life. It is a cheap sneer to refer to limited monarchs as hereditary Presidents, and it betrays a fundamental ignorance of the higher attributes of kingship. A President takes an oath to observe the constitution in virtue of which he has assumed office in much the same way as a responsible employee takes out a fidelity bond, and there the matter ends: it is a purely business transaction into which considerations of sentiment in no way enter. Very different is the initiation of a monarch into the responsibilities of his position. The coronation of a King is something more than the mere pageant which it is too often regarded in these latter days, for it represents the recognition by the monarch of the fact that he is responsible to God for his behaviour while on the throne. A President promising to obey the provisions of a man-made constitution, and a King being crowned by the Church of his country as the representative of God upon earth, are as different from one another as diamonds are from paste.

The one owes his office to the dictates of what is fondly supposed to be expediency, and the other to hereditary right and religious sanction. It is well, too, that there should be one office in the State which has a mystical significance, and to which the ordinary citizen, however vast his wealth or great his influence, cannot aspire. The fact that in a monarchy there is one thing which money cannot buy has a beneficial effect upon the whole standard of public life, which is invariably lower in a republic.

In fine, if the world has of late displayed a tendency to turn its back upon monarchy, this only proves, not that it is too advanced for hereditary kingship, but that it is still too backward.

Chapter II

The Historic British Monarchy

THERE is no institution in Great Britain about which more nonsense is written and talked at the present time than the monarchy. There is neither reasoned attack nor intellectual defence where it is concerned, but in their place there is a steady outpouring of what can only be described as sentimental clap-trap of the worst type, varied, in certain circles, by whispered stories of the alleged inebriety, or of the latest amour, of this or that Royal duke. Furthermore, the Royal Family is the object of such fulsome adulation on the part of the press, whenever its members appear in public to open an institution or to watch some sporting event, that nine-tenths of the population does not realize that the Crown serves any other than a purely ceremonial purpose.

In reality it is the only truly national institution still in existence, at any rate in England itself, for in Scotland the Church also is such. The Anglican establishment, in spite of its great traditions, is now no more than a sect, and there does not appear to be any reasonable prospect of it ever regaining its old position. The aristocracy, once representative of the best elements in the nation, is, save for the liquor barons and their relatives, poverty-stricken as the result of legislation which in the Victorian age it lacked the courage to oppose. The army is a mere shadow, and, in any event, the British are not in the habit of looking to the professional soldier for their leaders. Only the throne is left to symbolize the achievements of a nation that has made a few islands off the coast of Europe the centre of a world empire. King George V is, it may sur-

prise the readers of the popular press to learn, not only a hereditary layer of foundation-stones, but the latest of a long line of monarchs that stretches back into the night of the Dark Ages, without which there would have been no British Empire in the past, and, if it is allowed to come to an end, without which there will be no British Empire in the future. The pity is that of late years the members of the House of Windsor have become so apologetic, and have neglected to impress these facts upon the country as a whole.

To understand, however, the true significance of the monarchy it is necessary to trace its evolution since the Middle Ages. Feudalism, for some reason which it is by no means easy to comprehend, has in these latter days become synonymous in the popular mind with a state of society in which might was right, where the landowner had a right to the enjoyment of every damsel on his estate, and where what the Socialists are so fond of terming the "workers" were treated worse than the beasts in the field. The truth is that Feudalism was not a form of government in the ordinarily accepted sense of the term, for it was rather a form of civilization, and its basis, like that of Fascism to-day, was the belief that nothing was alien to the State, though that was not to be taken as implying that the State had a prescriptive right to interfere in every sphere of human activity.

The Feudal State was essentially a Corporate State,¹ in which the individual counted for very little and the corporation for a great deal. Representation was by interests and by occupation, rather than by the counting of heads grouped together upon a geographical basis for the purpose of an election. The Model Parliament, convoked by

¹ Cf. Antonio Goicoechea: *El Problema de las Limitaciones de la Soberanía en el Derecho Público Contemporáneo*, p. 145 et seq.; and Charles Benoist: *La Crise de l'Etat moderne*, p. 153.

Edward I in 1295, provides an excellent illustration of this. There came together on that occasion the great lay and spiritual peers in person, the representatives of the lower clergy, two knights from each shire, and a varying number of members, generally two, from each town and borough. In this way every interest in the kingdom was represented in Parliament. The lower clergy, it is true, soon preferred to sit in Convocation by themselves, and this proved to be the first step in the direction of representation by geography rather than by interests. In the reign of Edward I there were only three occupations of any importance in the country—namely, those of agriculturalist, trader, and priest—and they were all duly represented in the Model Parliament. The landed interest spoke through the mouths of the lay peers and of the knights of the shire; trade and industry were represented by the borough members; while the bishops, mitred abbots, and the nominees of the lower clergy stood for the Church and its interests. It is true that the constituencies were divided geographically, but the reason is that in those days the economic and geographical divisions were the same, for the primitive means of transport at his disposal prevented the City merchant from having his domicile in some rural district of Hertfordshire or Sussex.

At the apex of this pyramid stood the monarch, the symbol of the nation as a whole, and as the representative of which he was, after his coronation, the Lord's anointed. He was not a despot, bound by no laws other than those of his own making; rather he was an integral part of the system of which he was the head. His crown was the emblem of his trusteeship for his people, and his rights and duties were as exactly defined as those of his subjects. That was, indeed, the distinguishing characteristic of Feudalism: every man and woman had a definite place in society, which was responsible to them as they were to

it. There were penalties attaching to neglect of these responsibilities, and from them even the King was not exempt. At the same time, he was no figure-head, like the Doge of Venice, for an incompetent monarch, such as Stephen, meant a relapse into that anarchy which the Feudal System had been established to prevent. Much may doubtless be urged against Feudalism, but to appreciate its advantages one has but to compare those countries where it prevailed with those where it did not, while it is hardly necessary in this post-war age to urge that there was a good deal to be said for a system which did not regard any human being as an outcast. At least it was based upon some recognizable principle, which is more than can be advanced on behalf of most of its successors.

On the whole this system worked well until the middle of the fourteenth century, when the Black Death shook the economic and social foundations upon which the Feudal State rested.¹ In addition, there was the general disturbance of society occasioned by the Hundred Years' War, and in these circumstances it is not surprising that the period which followed was one of continuous civil disorder, mitigated only by the short reign of Henry V. The real cause, however, of the chaotic condition into which England relapsed at this time was that the Crown became merely the head of one of the contending parties. Richard II was too young when he succeeded to the throne to control the ambitions of his relatives, and although he very definitely made the effort in the last decade of his reign, the forces arrayed against him were too strong, and he was overthrown. Thereafter, for a century, the monarch was no more than the leader, or the puppet of the leaders, of one of the factions in the State. The so-called Lancastrian Experiment was an experiment, not only in Parlia-

¹ Cf. G. M. Trevelyan: *England in the Age of Wycliffe*, p. 186 *et seq.*

mentary, but also in its corollary, uncontrolled party, government, and the result was the anarchy of the Wars of the Roses. When they began, England was the leading Power in Europe, and when they finished she was hardly even a makeweight.¹

The obscurity in which the reign of Henry IV is enveloped has not yet been completely penetrated by the historians of the period, but it is clear that until the day of his death his throne was by no means secure, and he depended upon a faction rather than upon the nation as a whole. Henry V thoroughly appreciated the weakness of such a position, and he deliberately revived the old claim to the French crown with a view to diverting public attention from domestic affairs: even so, he had to deal with at any rate one serious conspiracy, while it is impossible to say how far he might have succeeded, for his career was terminated by an early death. The reign of his son is an example of the dangers attendant upon a monarchy dominated by interests, instead of one that dominates them. Save possibly for a few weeks in 1459, when, incidentally, he carried all before him, Henry VI never acted on his own initiative, and the possession of his person in order to give an appearance of legality to their proceedings became the object of the contending parties. Finally, of course, the Yorkists raised their own leader to the throne, and thereafter the victory of one faction or the other meant a change of monarch.

The moral of this triumph of the sectional over the national interest is so obvious as hardly to call for statement. The fifteenth century, during which the Crown ceased to perform its proper functions, is one of the most barren in English history, and is in marked contrast with its immediate predecessors. It took England the greater part of two hundred years to recover from the Black

¹ Cf. R. B. Mowat: *The Wars of the Roses*, p. 10.

Death, and the slowness of the revival was in no inconsiderable measure due to the continued prevalence of political unrest consequent upon the weakness of the throne.

The result of the Wars of the Roses was to impress this fact upon the mass of the English people, and for two centuries the monarch could always rely upon their support in his struggle against the parties. It is true that more than one King failed to realize this, and was overthrown in consequence, but Mary's personal appeal to the citizens of London for aid against Wyatt is typical of the national support that was forthcoming for the Crown when the latter knew how to invoke it. Those who would question this fact would do well to remember that the government of those days had not at its disposal the vast resources that a modern administration wields. There was no standing army, and no police force, to overawe its opponents, and the monarch had not in his gift innumerable lucrative offices with which to buy off the most dangerous of his critics. He could, it is true, confer titles, but hardly sell them, for ready money was scarce, and as the ennoblement of a man still meant to increase his importance it was a dangerous step to take with any of whose loyalty there was the least doubt. A few archers and men-at-arms, hardly sufficient to defend the palace against sudden attack, were all the force upon which a Henry VII could absolutely rely, and the secret of the strength of what is termed the New Monarchy must be sought, as has been said, elsewhere.

The strong government of Edward IV, Richard III, and the Tudors represented the triumph of the nation over the factions, and the former was symbolized by the Crown. There were occasions, such as the expedition of the future Henry VII in 1485, when a relapse was threatened, but it never actually took place, and the parties were controlled

by the throne, instead of controlling it as they had done for so long. That Henry VII to some extent, and his son most certainly, were ruthless in their methods cannot be denied, but after 1500 no rebellion against either had any chance of success. The memory of the Wars of the Roses was so vivid that it seemed preferable to the ordinary citizen to bear with one tyrant than to be subject to the caprices of fifty, and so the Tudors kept the headsman busy without thereby rousing public opinion against them to any marked extent. In any event, until religious complications were added to the country's other problems, they struck at the class which had caused all the trouble in the preceding century, and had their victims succeeded in their projects it would only have been the old story of the Wars of the Roses over again. Such being the case, the nation had little sympathy for them or for their ambitions.

In the middle of the sixteenth century there came the Reformation, and that movement was the turning-point in the history of the English monarchy. Until then the Crown, in spite of the vicissitudes of the Lancastrian period and of the Wars of the Roses, had, on the whole, held its own, but henceforward it was to fight against odds that, in the end, were to prove too much for it. The clue to the Revolution is to be found in the Reformation, and to arrive at a true interpretation of the one it is first of all necessary to understand the other.

Catholic writers are inclined to place the emphasis upon the democratic doctrines of Protestantism, and to argue that it was these which weakened the monarchies of Europe in those countries that turned their backs on the old faith. That there is much in this theory cannot, of course, be denied, but it is not the whole truth, for the Hohenzollerns went on from strength to strength after they had embraced Protestantism, and it does not explain the course of events in seventeenth-century England. In

effect, it was not the Reformation that ruined the English monarchy, but the extraordinarily bad use that Henry VIII made of it.

The English Kings had always been suspicious, not without some justification, of Papal encroachments, and in breaking with Rome Henry felt that he had freed the monarchy from that particular danger. Unfortunately the Tudor fear of the old nobility, which dated from the Wars of the Roses, when the Crown had been its plaything, caused Henry to raise up against the throne a far more formidable foe than the Pope had ever been, for the way in which he distributed the Church lands created the Whig oligarchy. His intention was clearly to call into existence a class which should not only act as a counterpoise to the older magnates, but which, owing to the fear of losing the ecclesiastical property that it had acquired, could be relied upon to give steady support to the Crown in the latter's struggle with Rome. In its immediate results this policy was justified, for Henry himself, Edward VI, and Elizabeth were backed by the new nobility and gentry in their contests with the Papacy and Spain, but the price that the monarchy had to pay in the end was its own suicide.

Why Henry did not keep the Church lands in his own possession it is impossible to conjecture, unless, indeed, one is prepared to admit that his whole religious policy was so unpopular that he was only able to carry it through by means of bribery upon the most extensive scale. Had he done so, the Crown would have become so rich that it would not have been dependent upon the House of Commons to anything like the extent that it became in the next century. When it is remembered that in the last years of his reign Charles II, owing to the great increase in trade, found the revenue from the customs freed him to no inconsiderable extent from the dependence to which

he had earlier been subjected, it is not difficult to appreciate what the position of the Crown might have been had it also had at its disposal the revenue from the confiscated possessions of the Church. In the new world that was coming into existence money was to be power in a way that it had not been in the less sophisticated days of the Feudal System. Either this prospect altogether escaped Henry, or he took it for granted that future monarchs would always be able to bully Parliament as he did himself: in any event, the Stuarts had to pay the penalty for the Tudor's lack of foresight, and in the end the whole fabric of the monarchy came crashing to the ground.

So long as the threat from without—that is to say, from Rome and Spain—continued to exist this development was latent rather than patent, for even the most ambitious of Reformation *nouveaux riches* appreciated the fact that so far as the monarchy and himself were concerned, if they did not hang together, they would most assuredly hang separately. Furthermore, the first generation not only felt none too secure, but was also too busy in settling down, to feel disposed for political intrigue, while it still regarded the Crown as its chief defence against those who would rob it of its newly-won acres. In the reign of Elizabeth this feeling was particularly strong, for those who regarded the new landowners as robbers also looked upon the Queen as a bastard and a usurper, so that there was a remarkable similarity of outlook on the part of ruler and ruled. When, however, Philip II of Spain was dead, Mary Queen of Scots had been put out of the way, and there was clearly no danger of another Armada sailing up the Channel, the preliminary rumblings of the coming storm began to be heard, and Elizabeth in her last years felt the first gusts of that hurricane which in little more than a generation was to beat down everything before it.

It must, however, be admitted that Elizabeth was a

shrewder statesman than her father had been, for she perceived from what quarter the greatest danger threatened. Puritanism was the enemy, and she did all she could to crush it. Like the Whigs of a later generation, she believed that it was possible to call a halt in the march of revolution, and though she was right in her conviction that Puritanism was the most serious existing threat to the monarchy, she was wrong in believing that it could be suppressed with any of the means at her disposal. The blunder of her father could not be retrieved so easily, and by the time of her death Puritanism was beginning to get hold of the third generation of the new magnates.

Furthermore, by this date all idea of the Corporate State had been completely lost, though no change had been made in the Constitution beyond the exclusion of the mitred abbots from the House of Lords in consequence of the Reformation. The influence of the landed interest—that is to say, of those whom Henry VIII had enriched by the dissolution of the religious houses—had increased very considerably, for many of the boroughs which had been active commercial centres in earlier times had decayed, with the result that their representation in Parliament was in the hands of the neighbouring territorial magnates. The later Tudors realized this, and writs for the return of members to the House of Commons were issued to places that had never received them before, but which were peculiarly susceptible to the influence of the Crown. Doubtless this was good enough tactics at the time, but it represented a further departure from the Corporate State, and heralded the corruption which was to characterize Parliament for the next two centuries. The policy of attempting to cast out Satan by means of Satan is always a dangerous one for Kings to adopt.

When the Stuarts succeeded the Tudors the monarchy already contained within itself the seeds of that weakness

which was to render it unequal to the performance of its old task of controlling the factions in the national interest. The chief cause of this weakness was its poverty, and for that it had to thank Henry VIII. In an age of rising prices its income was more or less stationary, and the only way in which it could obtain the funds necessary to carry on the government was by obtaining grants from the House of Commons—that is to say, from the very body which was dominated by those factions to control which was its historic function. The situation, in short, was an impossible one, and both James I and Charles I were too honest to adopt the one course that might have proved successful—namely, intervention in the Thirty Years' War—though it is possible that had he lived Henry, Prince of Wales, might have been less scrupulous in this respect. Parliament would willingly have voted supplies for a Protestant crusade against Spain and the Empire, and had Charles embarked upon it he could have provided himself with a standing army at the expense of his opponents, which he could later have used to crush them. Such a line of conduct might have been justified on grounds of expediency, but it would have implied an anti-Spanish foreign policy for which the day had gone by, and which, when it was adopted by Cromwell, brought the country to the brink of economic disaster. Above all, the traditional English monarchy was not a military despotism, and Charles was conservative before anything else.

This is not to say that Charles did not make a number of extremely serious mistakes. The most serious of them was that he realized neither his own weakness nor his opponents' strength. He thought that the monarchy was what it had been in the days of the Tudors, and, like many another King both before and since, he mistook the lip-service that was paid to him for true loyalty. Charles also committed the unpardonable

blunder of under-rating his enemies, and of believing what they said. When Pym, Eliot, Hampden, and a score of others, talked of the old rights of Parliament, Charles thought they meant what they said, and it did not occur to him that when Englishmen wish to bring about some really revolutionary change they always claim to be reverting to the customs of the past. The King himself had no thought of departing from the old Constitution, and he took it for granted that the Parliamentary leaders were actuated by the same motive, when, of course, they were merely using their devotion to the Constitution as a cloak to disguise their purpose of overturning it. As Disraeli very rightly said, the cause for which Hampden died in the field, and Sidney perished upon the scaffold, was the Whig government of England.¹

In retrospect, it is easy to see what Charles should have done. The parties had become too strong to be broken by a frontal attack, and the only hope of the Crown lay in the adoption of a policy of *divide et impera*, such as was to prove so successful in the reign of Charles II. The King, however, was temperamentally unfitted, at any rate until the experience of defeat had taught him much, to take such a line, and the consequence was one disaster after another. He allowed Hampden the unique privilege of becoming the only Englishman to secure immortality by a failure to pay his taxes; he attempted to arrest the Five Members in the House of Commons by day instead of in their beds by night; and he sacrificed, in the person of Strafford, the one man who might have helped him to victory. The weakness of Charles as a politician was that he was at once honest and obvious, and as his opponents were neither they naturally triumphed. In the last years of his life the King began to learn political wisdom, and concealed his ends: the result was that he made the restora-

¹ Cf. B. Disraeli: *Sybil*, bk. i, ch. 3.

tion of the monarchy inevitable, and was himself sent down to history by the Whigs as a double-crosser. Yet Charles always kept before him the historic duty of kingship to embody the national interest, and to prevent the parties from wrecking the State by their brawling: it was his misfortune, and England's, that he did not take the right steps to accomplish his object.

The establishment of the Commonwealth represented the triumph of a faction and the eclipse of the national idea. When the impeachment of the King was being read in Westminster Hall, and the phrase "all the good people of England" was reached, Lady Fairfax cried out from the gallery, "No, nor the hundredth part of them,"¹ and her interruption accurately described the state of the country as a whole. What had happened was that the various interests which saw in the Crown the one great obstacle to the fulfilment of their desires had combined to overthrow their common foe. It has been claimed that Charles died for religion and the poor,² and although this is to some extent an exaggeration, there is every justification for saying that his opponents were no true friends either to the one or to the other.

In the seventeenth century religion was what economics are to-day—that is to say, the one subject upon which mankind as a whole refused to listen to reason. In Great Britain there were three Churches—the Anglican, the Presbyterian, and the Roman—which stood for authority and tradition in religious matters, and there were innumerable sectaries, the Bolsheviks of the age, who believed, in effect, that every man should be his own Convocation, General Assembly, or Pope. In these days of religious toleration, or indifference, it may seem strange

¹ Cf. Clarendon: *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, bk. xi.

² Cf. Disraeli, *op. cit.*

that these sectaries should have been viewed with such hostility, and the ordinary reader of history may well be puzzled to account for the fact that they were not treated as are the minor dissenting bodies at the present time. The reason is that religion was but the cloak under which they worked for a political and social revolution. The Levellers and Fifth Monarchy men were the spiritual heirs of the Anabaptists, who, a hundred years before, had established in Munster that regime of terrorism, sadism, and lust which bears so strong a resemblance to that of Soviet Russia.¹ By themselves they could never have overthrown the monarchy, but they unfortunately obtained the assistance of the Presbyterians, who, with a few exceptions such as Montrose, did not appreciate until too late the nature of the allies with whom they were associating. It is true that they were not able to perpetrate in England the excesses which in a few short weeks had left in Munster neither a *bourgeois* with his property, nor a girl over twelve with her virginity, intact, but that was because, thanks to more than a century of strong monarchical government, the fabric of English civilization proved too strong to succumb to their onslaught. Unless, then, religion is to be confounded with social anarchy it is difficult to see how it was served by the hot-gospellers who worked against Charles I, and who, it must be remembered, had no more intention of granting liberty of conscience to those who disagreed with them than had Torquemada himself.

The possession of their neighbours' wives and daughters made little, and the confiscation of property made still less, appeal to the grandsons of the Reformation *nouveaux riches*, but even such allies as the sectaries were not to be despised when Charles began to levy direct taxation in the form of Ship Money. The injustice of a monarch who demanded that landowners in such inland counties as

¹ Cf. D. B. Wyndham Lewis: *Emperor of the West*, pp. 213-216.

Buckinghamshire should contribute to the upkeep of the navy was at once apparent to all who resided in them,¹ and it was a blunder of the first magnitude on the part of the King not to have realized that this view would be widely held. The moment that its pocket was in danger the squirearchy stood to arms, and so successful was it that not only was the monarchy overthrown, but its leaders have come down the ages as the champions of the people's rights against a tyrannical King. Whether the vast majority of Englishmen were better off during the period of the personal rule of Charles, or during the domination of his opponents, is a question that the Whig historians have never stopped either to ask or to answer. The Roundheads dressed out their essentially party programme in the jargon of modern demagoguery, and therefore they must have been great democrats.

The middle of the seventeenth century was a revolutionary era, for, as M. Jacques Bainville truly says, "*ce 'grand siècle' n'est devenu celui de l'ordre qu'après avoir passé par le désordre.*"² In Germany the Thirty Years' War had created a desert, while in France, Spain, and Italy there were disturbances which came within an ace of overturning the existing order. Such being the case, it was hardly to be expected that Britain would escape the contagion, and, as it actually happened, the disruptive forces gained a greater triumph there than anywhere else owing to the existence of certain conditions which were particu-

¹ Hampden refused to pay Ship Money on the ground that there was "no immediate danger." Of course there was no immediate danger in Buckinghamshire, but the mouths of the Thames and the Severn were infested with pirates. Foreign privateers raided Portsmouth and Plymouth, and the Barbary corsairs preyed upon the West of England and the South of Ireland. In five years 266 ships were taken from English harbours, and their crews sold in slavery.

² *Histoire de France*, p. 209.

larly favourable to them. It would, indeed, be a great mistake to ignore the international aspect of English revolutionary movements, and in this instance it was but part of the general revolt against authority, the chief difference being that while no one in modern France or Italy acclaims the Duchesse de Longueville or Masaniello as the harbingers of the democratic dawn, Cromwell and his associates are still regarded in that light in certain quarters in England. The historians of the Continent have displayed a greater sense of proportion in treating the whole affair as the groundswell of the past storm rather than as the forerunner of the disturbances of the nineteenth century. In each country, however, the disorder represented, in effect, the effort of the parties to shake off the restraint that the monarchy imposed upon their excesses.

The Protectorate was the prototype of many a dictatorial regime of later times. It was a reaction against the licence of the sectaries, and an attempt to get back to all for which the old monarchy had stood on its material side, but without restoring the rightful monarch. At the same time Cromwell came a great deal nearer to ultimate victory than most of his more recent imitators, and had he lived longer, or had he left a reasonably competent elder son, and, above all, had he not pursued so fatal a foreign policy,¹ the House of Cromwell might have established itself, as the House of Hanover subsequently succeeded in doing. Even so, it would only have secured itself by doing what the Napoleons for a time managed to do—that is to say, by obtaining the support of those who would normally have been the foremost defenders of the old dynasty. It would have been difficult for Oliver, who had played so

¹ For the disastrous consequences of this, cf. Margaret James: *Social Problems and Policy during the Puritan Revolution, 1640-1660*, p. 69 *et seq.*

prominent a part in the execution of Charles I, to have done this, but Richard might have been more successful.

As it was, the Protectorate represented but the rule of a faction that kept one man in power by brute force. Oliver realized this fact most clearly, and he did all that he could to get out of so difficult a position. He toyed with the idea of re-establishing the monarchy in his own person, and he attempted to draw up a constitution that should broaden the basis of his rule, just as Napoleon III was to do two hundred years later. It was all in vain, and in his short lifetime as Lord Protector there was a gulf between him and the mass of the English people which no constitutional compromise could bridge. The victories of his incomparable soldiers were the triumphs, not of England, but of his party, and the Royalists could fight for Philip IV of Spain against him without the great majority of their fellow-countrymen thinking any the worse of them for it. The historians of the nineteenth century did their best for Cromwell, but even they proved unable to convince their readers that he was a great national figure. Yet, as a statesman, there is this to be said for him: he was under no illusions as to the weakness of his hold upon the supreme power, and he never desired to rule merely in the name of a section. The former of these facts is a tribute to his head, and the latter to his heart.

The Restoration re-established the old conception of the monarchy as the one pre-eminently national institution. Mr. Arthur Bryant has borne witness in one of the most notable books of the present century to the masterly skill with which Charles II enabled the Crown to play its old part of controlling the excesses of the parties in the interest of the nation, and when he died he had triumphed, amid the almost universal acclamations of his subjects. When he was recalled to the throne he had an empty treasury, no army, and a country that for twenty years had been a

prey to every sort of disorder, material and intellectual. It was a prospect that might have appalled a superman, and it was not made any easier by the rapid degeneration of the House of Commons into one of the most corrupt legislative bodies known to history.¹ For twenty years Charles struggled to get things back to what they had once been: politician after politician attempted to thwart him, and catchword after catchword was invented to make wrong appear right. Greatly against his wishes, the King was compelled to allow his enemies enough rope to hang themselves, though more than once that involved the sacrifice of a friend, but there were limits beyond which he would not go. No man ever loved his son as Charles loved Monmouth, but he knew that he was illegitimate, and so he refused to alter the succession in the boy's favour, though he was under no illusions as to the limitations of his brother, the Duke of York. Similarly, unfaithful as he was to his marriage vow, he shrank from submitting the Queen to the indignity that Henry VIII had thought nothing of inflicting, for much less reason, upon Catherine of Aragon. Yet, in both cases, he could have purchased the quiet enjoyment of his throne by giving way.

Charles II was the last King of England who not only actually governed the country, but was incomparably abler than any of his ministers. He realized that it was the party spirit carried to extremes that had brought his father to the scaffold, and he rightly believed that the degradation of the Crown spelt the misery of the subject. Those who would question the claim of Charles that the monarchy was essential to the national prosperity would do well to turn to the relevant statistics.² During his reign the value of exports and imports arose from $7\frac{3}{4}$ millions to $11\frac{1}{2}$ millions; the increase in national savings was a hundred per

¹ Cf. Andrew Marvell: *Flagellum Parliamentarium*, *passim*.

² Cf. Keith Feiling: *British Foreign Policy, 1660-1672*, pp. 14-15.

cent.; the tonnage of British shipping was doubled; and the receipts from the customs duties rose from £260,000 to £600,000. It is true that the sabre-rattling of Cromwell's foreign policy was lacking, but then so was the distress which that foreign policy produced. By 1685 the country had recovered from the Civil Wars, and the power of the factions, which more than once since the Restoration had threatened to revive the old disturbances, had been broken, while their leaders were either in their graves or in exile. For the first time for nearly two generations the country was truly at peace.¹

In spite of all that has been urged in his defence, James II must bear the responsibility for the reversal of his brother's life-work. There can be no question of his sincerity, but his precipitance defeated its own ends. He rightly believed that the national interest required the establishment of religious toleration, and that the persecution of his co-religionists should cease, but he went to work to secure this in such a way as to give the impression that all he desired was to make the Catholic minority dominant in the State. The Church of England, which had to all intents and purposes elevated passive obedience to a monarch reigning by divine right into a dogma, was driven into opposition, and for the first and last time in the history of Anglicanism the bishops found themselves to be the idols of the populace. In effect, James allowed himself to drift into the position of the head of a party, and no very strong party at that, with the natural consequence that when another, and more powerful, party

¹ Yet, in spite of this, so commonly accepted is the Whig view of Charles that Sir Charles Oman, the Tory M.P. for Oxford University, writes in his *History of England*: "It was fortunate that his schemes were brought to such an untimely end, for if a cautious foe to the liberties of England, he was a very clever and insidious one. Of the stubborn folly which ruined his successor he would never have been guilty."

took the field against him his position was desperate. Even so, he would in all probability have prevailed had he attacked William as soon as the latter had landed, but his behaviour during the latter part of November, 1688, was on a par with the action of Charles X of France in issuing his *ordonnances* without first of all taking care that the garrison of Paris had enough ammunition to enforce them in the event of armed opposition.

When James ascended the throne he had such an opportunity as has been given to few monarchs in the course of history. The party which had brought his father to the scaffold, and had given so much trouble to his brother, was broken, and its leaders were in hopeless exile; Puritanism was moribund, and the Church of England was obsequious in its desire to carry out the wishes of the Crown; above all, the King had not only a standing army, but a full treasury, which an almost servile House of Commons hastened to augment still further. As if these were not advantages enough, he had not been upon the throne more than a few weeks when he was able to crush Monmouth's rebellion with consummate ease, and so to prove to his enemies the hopelessness of resistance. Had James risen to the height of his opportunities he might have put the monarchy upon such a basis as to have prevented for ever the establishment in this country of an uncontrolled Parliamentary System, with its inevitable consequence, the dissipation of the national assets in the interests of the contending parties; while in Ireland, being of the race of one section of the people and of the religion of the other, he might have bridged the gulf that in our own time appears to have become impassable. Unhappily, James did none of these things, but acted in such a manner that within four years of coming to the throne he was a fugitive on the soil of France, and the traditional British monarchy was in ruins.

That the Revolution was the work of a minority is not denied by the Whigs themselves, and the latter were never under any illusion that they had the nation behind them. It is a common fallacy among historians and politicians to question the stability of this or that regime on the ground that it is but representative of a minority, for history contains innumerable examples of governments existing for generations on the support of a minority. Clemenceau even argued that every government is an oligarchy in the etymological sense,¹ but without going so far as that one must admit that a government resting upon a minority may be, from its own point of view, highly successful, provided that its leaders realize the conditions upon which they are exercising power. The ruling oligarchy must see that enough people in key positions throughout the country are bound to it by ties of self-interest to make all attempt at resistance futile; that is to say, that these people will lose lucrative appointments, and quite probably their lives as well, if the oligarchy is overthrown. Such is the basis upon which the Soviet system in Russia rests, and to a large extent it is the foundation of the existing republican regime in France: it is, of course, the direct negation of national hereditary monarchy.

The Whigs grasped all this thoroughly, and they carried to its logical conclusion the work of Henry VIII in creating a vested interest that it should be impossible to uproot. As has already been shown, the Revolution was the logical sequel of the Reformation, for the latter called the new class into existence, and the former placed it in power. Never did a faction intrench itself so securely as did the victorious Whigs after 1688. Not an office in Church or State but was awarded to a reliable partizan, and long before the word Tammany was known in the English

¹ *Au Soir de la Pensée*, vol. ii, p. 431 *et seq.*

language its methods were being employed by the Whigs in a manner that Croker himself never excelled. Wars were commenced, prolonged, or concluded as best suited the interests, not of Britain, but of the Whigs, while the whole sordid business was defended in the name of liberty and patriotism, and the apology has deceived the majority of historians down to the present day.¹ Those, however, who wish to know the exact benefits which the "Glorious" Revolution conferred upon the British Isles would do well to forsake the glowing accounts to be found in the pages of Macaulay, Trevelyan, and Oldmixon, for the study of the Newgate Calendar, the pictures of Hogarth, and the working of the Penal Laws in Ireland.

So far as the monarchy was concerned, the immediate effect of the Revolution was to put the Crown back where it had been at the time of the Wars of the Roses—that is to say, it was reduced to the mere leadership of a faction: it could no longer control the parties in the national interest, which was exactly what the Whigs desired. William III and, to a lesser extent, Anne revolted in some degree against this usage, and as there was always a possibility that either of these sovereigns might come to some arrangement with the legitimate heir for the latter's eventual succession, the Whigs refrained from pushing them too far. With the Hanoverians, however, the case was very different, and the dominant oligarchy did not hesitate to apply the screw, while the Fifteen strengthened its hand by demonstrating how unpopular the new dynasty really was. Indeed, the situation resembled that in the fifteenth century more than superficially, for after 1715 it was quite clear that a change of the party in power would mean a change in the person of the monarch: so, as in the earlier period, the King was nothing more nor less than a "good

¹ Professor Basil Williams, in his *Stanhope*, even calls William III. "the Great Deliverer." Note the capitals.

party man." That Venetian Constitution, which Disraeli the author so greatly derided and which Disraeli the statesman did so little to amend, came into existence in place of the old national monarchy that stood above the parties and their strife.

Oligarchs habitually destroy the souls of the nations they govern, and so it was with the England of the eighteenth century which the Revolution had made so safe for Whiggery.¹ No doubt a reaction against the turmoil of the previous hundred years was due, but it would not have taken the form it did had not every sort of enthusiasm been sternly repressed by those in office. It may be all very well to let sleeping dogs lie, but it is another matter to drug every dog with a view to keeping it in a permanent state of somnolence, which was the policy of Walpole. Particularly was the Church so controlled, partly by the appointment of none but Whigs to every post of importance, and partly by the suspension of the meeting of Convocation, that it became a mere department of the State, with the result that when a religious revival did take place it was driven out of the bounds of the Establishment. In Ireland and Scotland the results of the Whig rule were still more deadly, and, especially in the case of the former, the legacy that it bequeathed to the future was disastrous. On the other hand, those who supported the ruling oligarchy had certainly nothing of which to complain, and it is only now, in the post-war era, that their descendants are being com-

¹ Miss Audrey Cunningham rightly draws attention to this in *The Loyal Clans* (pp. 359-360) when she says: "The practical but most illogical application of the principles of monarchy, which brought about the Revolution, struck a blow at the theory of divine right as commonly understood, and impoverished the spiritual life of the people. . . . The spiritual idea was eliminated from the civil government, and Erastianism divorced from the divine right of Kings ended in the secularization of the Church and a utilitarian theory of political life."

pelled to sell the vast palaces and the broad acres that were the reward for keeping Whiggery in power.¹

Even Walpole could not wholly succeed in stifling all criticism of this state of affairs, and among the protests which it aroused by far the most important was that of Bolingbroke in his pamphlet *The Idea of a Patriot King*.² It is to be noted that it was not until he had most signally failed as a statesman that Bolingbroke began to acquire a reputation as a political philosopher, and had he been able to make up his mind on that August morning, in 1714, when Anne died he might have presented his country with a Patriot King in James III instead of merely with a volume on the need for one. Nevertheless, in this book, which is far more quoted than read at the present time, Bolingbroke showed a thorough grasp of the true principle of monarchy as the embodiment of the national idea. He wrote, it is true, with the party purpose of providing Frederick, Prince of Wales, with a stick with which to belabour his father's ministers, but, with all his faults, Bolingbroke was too great a genius to produce an argument that should merely serve so transient an end. He stated the case for monarchy, and what he wrote holds for all time.

The weakness of Bolingbroke's thesis lay in the fact that it is extraordinarily difficult for any other than a legitimate dynasty to provide a Patriot King. The Hanoverians were usurpers, and in the last resort they were dependent upon the minority whose fortunes were linked with theirs, for both in 1715 and in 1745 the English people had shown in no uncertain fashion that it was not prepared to lift a finger to keep them on the throne. In short, those who thought with Bolingbroke wanted neither George II nor

¹ For a complete account of the evils that resulted from the so-called "Glorious Revolution," cf. the author's *The Jacobite Movement*, *passim*.

² Published in 1749.

Frederick, Prince of Wales, but James III. Yet the power of the Crown under the Constitution was still very great, and it was no wonder that Bolingbroke did not see the flaw in his scheme. Whether, even had the Jacobites proved victorious, the revival of the old national monarchy at that time was still possible is open to doubt, for James would have owed his restoration far more to the efforts of a party than his uncle had done in 1660. Yet the Stuarts alone could have reigned as Bolingbroke wished the monarchs of England to reign, for their title in no way depended upon Parliamentary sanction. So long as there were the two rival dynasties contending for the throne the Guelphs were bound to be party Kings, and it was not until the Stuart claim had passed to another cadet branch that it became possible for the Hanoverians to revert to the old national tradition.

It was not Frederick, but his son, George III, who attempted to put into practice the theories of Bolingbroke, and in spite of the disability under which he suffered of not being the legitimate sovereign he succeeded to no inconsiderable extent. The decline of Jacobitism assisted him in a marked degree, for it regained for the ruling monarch the support of those who were naturally the bulwark of his throne, but who had been in opposition for two generations. Furthermore, the Whig oligarchy was becoming divided and enfeebled, and, after the collapse of the Elibank Plot in 1753 had shown that the danger from the Jacobites was at an end, the Whigs could no longer claim that they alone stood between England and the rekindling of the famous fires of Smithfield. George III, too, if a man devoid of the higher gifts of statesmanship, knew exactly what he wanted, and that is so rare a characteristic in British political circles as to give its possessor a natural advantage over his rivals. George intended to be a Patriot King of the Bolingbroke type, and by the exercise of the

Royal authority to ensure that the quarrels of the factions were subordinated to the interests of the nation.

How far he might have gone towards the achievement of this goal in ordinary circumstances it is impossible to say, but the American War and his own health proved his undoing. Legions of propagandists have for years devoted themselves to the creation of the legend that there was something particularly noble about the Declaration of American Independence, and that once the intrepid colonists took up arms in the name of liberty Great Britain was bound to be defeated. In reality, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the colonists were in much the same position as Mr. De Valera—that is to say, that they wanted all the advantages, but none of the responsibilities, of association with Britain; while had the British admirals and generals displayed ordinary competence the revolt would have been nipped in the bud. It was the misfortune, not the fault, of George III that the struggle assumed the proportions it did, but he had to bear the blame. Then the fact that his mind was liable to give way prevented any consistency of policy. Yet he never abandoned the attempt to enhance the power of the Crown, and so strong was it even after the disasters of the American War that the King was able to have his way about Catholic Emancipation in 1801 (though so far as Pitt was concerned that question was probably rather the excuse, than the reason, for his resignation), and six years later he scored an even more notable triumph: he forced the ministry of “All the Talents” to resign, although it had a majority in the House of Commons; he summoned the Duke of Portland to form an administration, and the result of the ensuing General Election showed that once more the King had interpreted the wishes of his subjects correctly. In 1811 he became permanently insane, and in that year the reign of his son may be said to have commenced.

The fact that from the fall of the Fox-North coalition in 1783 down to the final illness of George III, with the exception of the short-lived administration of "All the Talents," the government was carried on by those whom subsequent generations have termed Tories is liable to lead to a misapprehension. Pitt, Addington, and Perceval, in the reign of George III, and Liverpool and Canning, in that of his successor, were not "Church and King" Tories of the old type, or they would have co-operated with the monarch to achieve the purpose for which he was working. These neo-Tories, the spiritual ancestors of the modern Conservatives, were in reality merely moderate Whigs who had learnt something by experience, and as a result of their influence official Conservatism to-day is but Whiggery under another name. Most leading Conservatives at the present time are perfect types of Whigs transplanted into the twentieth century, which is to say that in any country more logical than England they would be classed as definitely of the Left. Of course every party, if it is to live, must attract recruits from outside, but it has been the peculiar misfortune of British Conservatism that those who have joined it from other parties have so often forgotten to adjust their dress before leaving.

The difference between Tory, the neo-Tory, and the Whig conception of the monarchy is clear. The Tory believes that it is the incarnation of the national tradition, and that it is the duty of the Crown to ensure that the disputes of the parties are not carried to such extremes as will endanger the interests of the nation. He believes in the doctrine of the Patriot King as stated by Bolingbroke, and his ideal monarch is a Charles II. The neo-Tory is an adherent of the doctrine of the balance of the Constitution, and he would like to see the influence of the Crown and the three Estates of the Realm nicely balance one another. This, of course, is the negation of true Toryism.

but it is as far as most Conservatives are prepared to go at the present time, and a great many will not go nearly so far. The real Whig, and the Liberal, wishes the Crown to be a mere figure-head, like the Doge of Venice, and, as has been said, this conception of its functions is unfortunately held by many a Conservative to-day. As will be seen when the position of the monarchy in the reigns of Queen Victoria and her successors comes to be discussed, the Crown in this country has at least as much to fear from its professed friends as from its declared enemies.

It is a by no means uncommon mistake to assume that the decline of the power of the Crown commenced with the last illness of George III, but such is not, in fact, the case. Both George IV and William IV exercised more direct influence upon politics than the first two sovereigns of their dynasty had done, and William actually dismissed a ministry that had a majority in the House of Commons, though his action is not strictly comparable with that of his father in 1807, for he had the excuse of Lord Althorp's succession to a peerage, and the consequent necessity of finding a new Chancellor of the Exchequer. There is, indeed, little that cannot be with justice charged to the account of George IV: he betrayed, in turn, everyone who had ever trusted him, and he was equally faithless as a husband, a lover, and a friend, while his conversation was so objectionable that the Duke of Wellington, whose loyalty was above suspicion, and who was by no means particular in the choice of language himself, once said: "He speaks so like old Falstaff, that, damn me, if I was not afraid to walk into a room with him"; and in the year of his accession to the throne the Duke declared him "degraded as low as he could be already."

At the same time the King's intelligence was far above the ordinary, and he entertained a very high opinion of his prerogative, which he was determined to do nothing to

diminish. The history of his relations with Canning throws a great deal of light upon the position of the Crown at that period, and, incidentally, reflects the highest credit upon the minister for a devotion to principle with which he is not usually credited.¹ George disliked Canning personally, probably because of the latter's espousal of the cause of Queen Caroline, and he disagreed with his policy, particularly so far as the recognition of the revolted Spanish colonies in America was concerned. For years there was a struggle between the two men, but though George tried to hamper Canning at every turn, the latter never cast any suspicion upon the King's right of interference, and all he maintained was that it should be exercised in a constitutional manner, for George was continually endeavouring to utilize his position as King of Hanover to oppose the official policy of his British ministers. So highly did Canning think of the power of the Crown, in spite of his differences with the reigning monarch, that when he formed his ministry he endeavoured to enlist it in his support by reviving the post of Lord High Admiral for the Duke of Clarence.

That William IV did nothing to weaken the prerogative is proved by his action in 1834, but if the power of the monarch was undiminished when he died three years later, the prestige of the monarchy had become very considerably dimmed, and it was freely predicted that Queen Victoria would be the last British sovereign. If a monarch is to be the effective representative of the nation he must, in a civilized community, be himself the object of respect. George III had always retained his hold upon the affection of his subjects, and the fact that they respected him far more than they did most of his ministers had much to do with the success of his efforts to revive the power of the Crown. With his two successors it was otherwise. Enough

¹ Cf. Sir Charles Petrie: *Life of George Canning*, p. 165 *et seq.*

has been said of the character of George IV to show that loyalty to him personally was an impossibility, and though William was somewhat more estimable in his private life, his whole outlook was that of a retired ship's captain. The throne had lost its dignity, and there was a reversion to the days of the first two Georges, without, however, the same necessity for the governing class to support the dynasty at all costs in case a worse thing befell.

The accession of Queen Victoria was to prove the turning-point in the modern history of the British monarchy, and it is well to realize that at that date the Crown still wielded very great direct power. The King could not, it is true, govern against the wishes of the House of Commons, for the simple reason that if he did so he would soon find himself without the necessary funds to carry on the administration, and the Royal veto had not been used since the House of Hanover came to the throne; but twice within a generation a ministry that had a majority in the Commons had been dismissed, while governments that wished to bring forward measures of which the monarch did not approve had been forced to resign, and all the lesser prerogatives, such as those of mercy, the making of treaties, the creation of peers, and the nomination to official appointments, were still intact. Moreover, this state of affairs had so far been admitted by the leading statesmen of the day, though it is clear that a good many of them anticipated with pleasure the accession of an inexperienced girl as certain to provide them once again with the opportunity of playing the old party game uncontrolled by the Crown acting in the interest of the nation.

Chapter III

The Modern British Monarchy

THE position when Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837 was that a monarch who wished to exercise considerable personal influence upon the work of government would have found both the letter of the law, and a number of recent precedents, favourable to such a course. The monarchy, it is true, was a Parliamentary one, for George I and his descendants had only reigned by virtue of an Act of Parliament—namely, the Act of Settlement of 1701—and on the score of hereditary alone there were many people who had a better claim than the new Queen. On the other hand, since the Revolution the power of the Crown had not in any way been further reduced by statute, and, as has been shown, the various monarchs who had occupied the throne since that date had put very different constructions upon their rights under the Constitution. William III personally conducted the country's relations with its neighbours, and also commanded its armies in the field. Anne often attended the meetings of the Cabinet as well as the debates in the House of Lords, and always claimed the right to appoint ministers according to her own choice, and from any party. Of the Hanoverians, the first two had been content to allow the Royal power, for the most part, to be exercised by the ruling oligarchy, but the last three had successfully prevented any usurpation of their prerogative. •

Of recent years it has been generally assumed that the power of the monarchy has declined since the death of Queen Victoria rather than during her reign, but such an assumption has little foundation in fact, and it probably

arises from a confusion of thought between power and prestige. Victoria and her two successors have raised the prestige of the Crown to a greater height than it has attained since the fall of the Stuarts, but that cannot blind us to the fact that, until the action of King George V in 1931, its active influence upon events during their reigns was steadily diminishing. The reason for this is not far to seek, and it is to be found in the political education of Queen Victoria. What her views, if any, of the place of the Crown in the Constitution may have been before her accession it is difficult, for lack of sufficient evidence on the point, to say, but once she was Queen she passed under the control of that arch-Whig, Lord Melbourne, whose theory it was that monarchs should be seen but not heard. His knowledge of women is attested by the fact that the suspicions of at least one husband were aroused on this score, and he exerted it to the full in his relations with the young Queen. The result was that she came to believe that the Whig doctrine of monarchy was the only possible one for her to adopt, and although the woman often rebelled against the restrictions which the acceptance of this doctrine imposed, the Queen always yielded to them in the last resort.

If the Great Rebellion and the Revolution were the twin tragedies of the seventeenth century, the death of George Canning at the age of fifty-seven was an equal misfortune for the nineteenth, for had he lived another twenty years he, not Lord Melbourne, would have been the mentor of Queen Victoria. Canning would not, it is true, have brought her up to be a monarch of the old Stuart type, but with his firm belief in the necessity of maintaining the balance of the Constitution he would have taught her to take a much more exalted view of the prerogatives of the Crown than Melbourne would ever have tolerated. In this way the growth of democracy, which was to bring the

nation to the verge of bankruptcy in the next century, would have been arrested, and the House of Commons would not have been allowed to gather to itself the powers of all three Estates. In justice to Melbourne it must be stated that he was no democrat, but the Whigs of his generation had not the wisdom of their predecessors, and they played with Liberal fire without realizing that it was only a question of time when they, and everything for which they stood, would be burned. In short, they made exactly the same mistake in their encouragement of Liberalism as Henry VIII had committed in respect of the distribution of the property of the Church, and with the same ultimate consequences.

The Prince Consort made some effort to resist the course of events that threatened to reduce the Crown to a cipher, but his was an uphill task, and he died before he had made much headway. In the first place he was a foreigner, and in the second his own position under the Constitution was a peculiar one, so that he had greater difficulties to face than would have been the case had he himself been the reigning monarch. Moreover, it is to be doubted whether his knowledge of human nature—for he showed himself an extremely bad psychologist in the case of the Prince of Wales—was sufficient to enable him to outwit the opponents by whom he would have been confronted. In the latter half of the nineteenth century the strength of the parties was enormous, and as the country was still rich enough to afford their strife, it was as yet prepared to believe their assertion that their antics in Parliament and elsewhere really did represent the free working of free institutions. By the late fifties and early sixties Parliamentary Government had secured such a hold upon the imagination of the British people that it clearly had to run its course through repeated extensions of the franchise to Socialism, and thence to pauperization and ruin, before

the time would come to curb its excesses for the nation's good. The Prince Consort could have done nothing to avert the catastrophe at that late hour.

Throughout the reign of Queen Victoria, then, the power of the Crown was continually on the decline, and a careful perusal of the Queen's published letters reveals this fact very clearly. As Sir Sidney Lee says:¹ "Many times did she write to a minister that 'Never would she consent' to this or that proposal: yet her formal signature of approval was always at his service at the needful moment." Needless to say, this state of affairs suited the parties admirably, and they began to develop the non-participation of the Crown in the government of the country into a convention of the Constitution. Bagehot declared that an English monarch "must sign his own death-warrant if the two Houses unanimously send it up to him,"² and Gladstone undoubtedly spoke for the Liberalism of his day when he wrote:³ "The ideas and practice of the time of George III, whose will in certain matters limited the action of the ministers, cannot be received otherwise than by what would be on their part nothing less than a base compliance or shameful subserviency dangerous to the public weal and in the highest degree disloyal to the dynasty. It would be an evil and a perilous day for the monarchy were any prospective possessor of the Crown to assume or claim for himself final or preponderating, or even independent, power in any one department of the State." The case for allowing the anti-national strife of the factions full play, without any effective control by that national force, the monarchy, could hardly have been better stated by Shaftesbury himself. ◊

The Conservative standpoint, at any rate after Disraeli

¹ *King Edward VII*, vol. ii, p. 34.

² *The English Constitution*, ch. iii.

³ *Gleanings of Past Years*, vol. i, p. 233.

had made his own opinions the official views of his party, was slightly different in theory, though almost identical in practice. It was the prestige, rather than the power, of the Crown which was increased when the Queen was made Empress of India, and Disraeli, who nominally held the neo-Tory views of Canning concerning the monarchy, did nothing to arrest the decline of the latter's power, while the Marquess of Salisbury was a pure Whig in these matters. If Queen Victoria had fewer differences of opinion with her Conservative than with her Liberal ministers, it was merely because she was generally in agreement with their policy, not because they allowed her more independence of action. The methods of her two greatest ministers were different, for Gladstone addressed her as a public meeting, and Disraeli as a woman, but their attitude towards the Crown as an institution was the same. The Conservatives were certainly more attached than their opponents to the Imperial idea, but they did not realize that a strong monarchy was essential to it, though they had not, at the date of the Queen's death, as yet begun that policy of giving sops to the proletarian Cerberus which in a generation was to spell national ruin: a policy that would not have been possible had not the Royal authority been undermined in advance.

Nevertheless, during the Victorian era there was no legislative diminution of the power of the Crown, which was still considerable, as even Bagehot admits: ¹ "It would very much surprise people if they were only told how many things the Queen could do without consulting Parliament, and it certainly has so proved, for when the Queen abolished purchase in the army by an act of prerogative (after the Lords had rejected the Bill for doing so), there was a great and general astonishment. But this is nothing to what the Queen can by law do without consult-

¹ *The English Constitution*, Introduction.

ing Parliament. Not to mention other things, she could disband the army (by law she cannot engage more than a certain number of men, but she is not obliged to engage any men); she could dismiss all the officers, from the General Commanding-in-Chief downwards; she could dismiss all the sailors too; she could sell off all our ships of war and all our naval stores; she could make a peace by the sacrifice of Cornwall, and begin a war for the conquest of Brittany. She could make every citizen in the United Kingdom, male or female, a peer; she could make every parish in the United Kingdom a university; she could dismiss most of the civil servants; she could pardon all offenders. In a word, the Queen could by prerogative upset all the action of civil government within the government, could disgrace the nation by a bad war or peace, and could, by disbanding our forces, whether land or sea, leave us defenceless against foreign nations."

When the Queen died the great prerogatives of the Crown, therefore, were that of mercy, the dissolution and convocation of Parliament, the dismissal and selection of ministers, the declaration of war and peace, the making of treaties, the cession of territory, the creation of peers, and the nomination to official appointments. In addition, the monarch might refuse his assent to a Bill, but this right had not been exercised since the reign of Anne. On the other hand, Queen Victoria, owing to the accumulated experience of so many years, was able to exercise very considerable influence over her ministers. In the latter part of her life she could quote from personal experience precedents relating to events that had occurred before some of them were even born, and this gave her an enormous advantage in her dealings with them. Still, there can be no disguising the fact that the Crown had a hard fight with the politicians, and it was always on the defensive. The parties had succeeded in making the country believe that

they were the champions of its liberty, and the day of disillusionment was still far distant.

To no inconsiderable extent the diminution of the power of the Crown at this time was due to the withdrawal of the Queen from public life for many years after the death of the Prince Consort, and it is a curious commentary upon the character of the English people that this retirement on the part of the monarch should have been followed by the growth of a definite, if short-lived, republican movement.¹ The English like to see their sovereigns, and the most popular have always been those who took obvious pleasure in showing themselves to their subjects. Charles II walking in St. James's Park, and feeding the ducks, where every Londoner who wished could watch him, is the model which the wise King of England will always keep before him. King Edward VII owed a great deal of his popularity to the delight which he clearly took in appearing in public, and King George V would not have been able to render such enormous services as he has rendered to the State had he not early won the affection of the people by appearing among them on the occasion of the national sporting festivals. Such being the case, it is hardly surprising that the long mourning in which Queen Victoria indulged for her dead husband, who had never been particularly popular in the land of his adoption, should have aroused a feeling of resentment, which was not lessened by the contemporaneous overthrow of monarchy in France.

Up to a certain point, indeed, the way for the republican movement had been paved by Thackeray, who lashed the House of Hanover with scorn in his lectures on *The Four Georges*, and never lost an opportunity of ridiculing the stately ceremonial that had surrounded *Le Roi Soleil*. Whatever the reason for his attitude, the latter was not

¹ For a detailed account of this cf. M. MacDonagh: *The English King*, pp. 153-179.

without its effect, and when the French Empire fell, the working classes, too, began to feel that the time had come for them to do something. On Sunday, September 19th, 1870, the Phrygian red cap was hoisted on poles in Trafalgar Square to the singing of the *Marseillaise*, and orators hailed the coming of the Republic of England. As a result of this demonstration, a number of republican clubs were founded in London and the provinces, and Charles Bradlaugh, who had thrown himself wholeheartedly into the movement, published a pamphlet entitled *The Impeachment of the House of Brunswick*. It was couched in a peculiarly offensive style upon which even a modern revolutionary could hardly hope to improve, and Bradlaugh did not hesitate to attack altar as well as throne, comparing the Trinity with a monkey with three tails. From his point of view this was a tactical blunder, for however little interest the English may take in the practice of religion, blasphemy of this nature is always repugnant to them.

In a short time Sir Charles Dilke (whose father had received his baronetcy for services to the Prince Consort), John Morley, and Joseph Chamberlain made their appearance upon the republican platform, and at a meeting in Birmingham Chamberlain declared: "I do not feel any great horror at the idea of the possible establishment of a republic in our country. I am quite certain that sooner or later it will come." John Richard Green, the historian, shared the same views,¹ and he gave expression to them, *inter alia*, by sneering at the Queen for her anxiety when the Prince of Wales was dangerously ill with typhoid fever. On March 19th, 1872, Dilke moved in the House of Commons for an enquiry into the Civil List, and he was

¹ Forty years later his widow allowed her house to be used by those who were plotting treason against King George V; cf. Darrell Figgis: *Recollections of the Irish War*, p. 15 *et seq.*

supported by that most paradoxical of characters, Auberon Herbert.¹ When the division was taken, the motion was rejected by 276 votes to 2, for its only supporters, in addition to the tellers, Dilke and Herbert, were Sir Wilfred Lawson, the temperance reformer, and George Anderson.

This outbreak of republicanism proved to be a mere flash in the pan. The upper and middle classes were, with the exceptions already quoted, solid in their support of the monarchy, and among the lower orders the overthrow of the throne only appealed to a few extremists, chiefly foreigners. The fact was that a monarchical reaction had set in before the republicans had had time to get their campaign properly started, and they were never afterwards able to make any real headway against it. The nation had more heart than John Richard Green, and the recovery of the Prince of Wales awoke a widespread feeling for sympathy both for him and for his Royal mother. Then, again, the state of republican France, and of Spain, which was at the moment indulging in its favourite, and expensive, pastime of trying to exist without the Bourbons, was not such as to encourage Great Britain to conduct an experiment in republicanism. The Royal Family, too, had been by no means blind to the threat contained in the movement, and its members began once more to show themselves in public in the way that the people loved. As the years passed, and the Conservatives came into office, the Imperial conception of the Crown began to develop, and it was realized that the establishment of an English republic would spell the end of the British Empire. In these circumstances there were clearly no votes to be gained by a continued devotion to republicanism, and so, ere long, Dilke kissed hands upon appointment to a post in the ministry, Chamberlain gave the Prince and Princess of Wales the warmest of greetings when they

¹ In his youth he had founded the Canning Club at Oxford.

visited Birmingham, of which city he was then Mayor, while Morley finished his career as a peer of the realm.

It is not easy to give King Edward VII his correct place among the Kings of England, for his short reign is at once too recent and too remote for a just appreciation of it to be yet formed. It coincided with the last of Great Britain's prosperous years, and so there is a not unnatural tendency to regard it as a golden age, much as that of Edward the Confessor was, quite wrongly, regarded by the generation that suffered under the first two Norman sovereigns. At one time, too, there was a widespread belief that King Edward VII was a great statesman, who was responsible for the conclusion of the Franco-British Entente, and that he exercised very considerable personal influence upon the foreign policy of the country. Published documents do not bear out this view. The foreign policy of the reign was conceived by the Marquess of Lansdowne, and carried out by him and by his successor, Sir Edward, now Viscount, Grey. That the King approved of the line that these two truly great men took cannot, of course, be doubted, and he gave them all the help he could, but that is a very different matter from having originated the policy they pursued. What is certain is that he never had the idea of encircling Germany with which he is credited in Central Europe, though it must be admitted that his personal bad relations with his nephew, the German Emperor, were not conducive to the promotion of a friendly understanding between London and Berlin. For the rest, when one remembers the continual meetings with foreign monarchs, meetings which had as little result as the innumerable conferences of a later age, the impression left is one of futility rather than of duplicity.

Socially, the Court counted for a great deal more in the reign of King Edward than it had done in that of his mother, and for the first time since the Revolution it was

the centre of social life. When the Queen died there was a good deal of apprehension among those in whose memory the Tranby Croft scandal was still vivid with regard to the type of person who would henceforth be found at Court, but, on the whole, these fears were not realized. Society, as in the Roman Empire, was itself becoming very mixed, and for the Court to have maintained the aloofness of the Victorian era would only have made matters worse instead of better.¹ The King did all he could to revive the old pageantry of the monarchy, and there was a splendour about Royalty in his reign which was undeniably popular, the more so as it followed on the semi-retirement of Queen Victoria's later days. There might be one or two people at Buckingham Palace who need not have been received there, and the standard of aristocratic behaviour fell somewhat in the opening years of the century, but the man-in-the-street, who had respected Queen Victoria, came to love "Teddy" as his ancestors had loved "Old Rowley," and during the dark days of the war it was no rare thing to hear the remark, "This wouldn't have happened if Teddy had been alive": an observation, however untrue, which testifies to the affection in which King Edward VII was held by his subjects.

The importance of this aspect of the King's activities can hardly be overrated. Not the least of the many disadvantages of a republican regime is that the whole tone of society is lowered by the absence of a Court, and from the capital this demoralization spreads to all parts of the country. The standard of social conduct in the United States has only to be compared with that in Great Britain

¹ At the Drawing Rooms the Queen was in the habit of kissing the daughters of dukes, marquesses, and earls, who were being presented for the first time. On one occasion Her Majesty, quite inadvertently, was about to salute the wife of a knight in this way, when a Gentleman-in-Waiting audibly whispered, "Don't kiss her, Your Majesty; she's not a real lady."

for the truth of this statement to be at once apparent. As the subaltern of Hussars said when asked for his opinion of the rôle of cavalry in modern warfare, "It is to give tone to what would otherwise be a vulgar brawl." Never had the British Court counted for so much as it did under King Edward VII and his consort, for they realized that the absence of a King in Paris gave them the opportunity of making London the social centre of the world. While the French monarchy stood no other could hope to rival it, but once it was gone the British Court filled the empty place. Nor was this all, for in abandoning some of the exclusiveness that had characterized his mother's relations with the outside world the King greatly broadened the basis upon which the monarchy itself rested. Snobs might jibe, when the King went yachting with Sir Thomas Lipton, about the incongruity of a monarch "going for a sail with his grocer," but it was typical of the way in which he showed those who had made their own way in the world that they would not be treated as pariahs.

Society in the Victorian era despised what it called "trade," which was a somewhat illogical attitude in view of the fact that it was largely composed of the children and grandchildren of "nabobs" and of profiteers of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.¹ Queen Victoria's outlook in these matters was doubtless the result of her husband's influence, and that was typically German. The Queen would never have sat down to dinner with a playwright as Louis XIV had done with Molière, but her son revived the older, and more generous, traditions of the monarchy.* The King once more delighted to honour any who showed themselves worthy, whatever might have been their origin, and the snobbery of the nineteenth century gradually began to disappear, though the day of the charity

¹ Cf. B. Disraeli: *Sybil*, bk. i, ch. 3: "Mr. Canning, long kept down by the plebeian aristocracy of Mr. Pitt as an adventurer."

ball, that great leveller of class distinctions, was not yet. In short, King Edward VII made the Crown once more national on its social side.

The success of the King in reviving the old pageantry that was associated with the monarchy in the past cannot, however, conceal the fact that during his reign the Crown steadily lost ground. While he was on the throne most of the great prerogatives were challenged, and in each case the King gave way. In this connection it is not without interest to note that the most resounding attacks upon the Royal prerogative were made by the Conservatives,¹ then led by Mr. Balfour, whose attitude in all that concerned the Crown was purely Whiggish. In 1905 Parliament was dissolved at the request of Mr. Balfour, who declared that the House of Commons could insist upon dissolution, and that the Cabinet had in fact dictated it: he also held that ministers might be selected or dismissed by the Premier without reference to the Crown. Futhermore, when a cession of territory was necessary as a result of the conclusion of the Franco-British Entente in 1904, Mr. Balfour took the view that the assent of Parliament was necessary. Only the prerogative of the declaration of war was left untested by this most Whiggish of Conservative leaders, and that for the excellent reason that no war was declared while he was in office: on the other hand, the peace that put an end to the South African War was previously debated in the Cabinet.

The determined hostility which Mr. Balfour displayed towards the throne is probably to be explained not only by the fact that he was at heart, not a Tory at all, but a Whig, but also by his intellectual contempt for the monarch with whom he had to deal. King Edward was a man of the world in the best sense of that much-abused term, while about Mr. Balfour there was, it must be confessed, a good

¹ Cf. Sir Sidney Lec: *King Edward VII*, vol. ii, pp. 43-44.

deal of the intellectual snob. The King read, in his idle moments, French novels, and the Prime Minister, on the same occasions, volumes of German philosophy, so it is hardly surprising that the latter's innate Whiggery should have been strengthened by his scorn for the monarch's idea of mental relaxation. Moreover, the ministry, although nominally Conservative, was Whig in its outlook, for it contained a Duke of Devonshire, a Duke of Marlborough, and a Marquess of Lansdowne. Unfortunately, Mr. Balfour's attitude towards the Royal prerogative has been adopted by his successors in the leadership of the Conservative party, and during the existence of Mr. MacDonald's second Socialist administration Mr. Baldwin and Sir Austen Chamberlain officially sponsored a proposal to refer all treaties to a Select Committee of the House of Commons.¹

With the two Liberal Prime Ministers of his reign, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Asquith, King Edward's relations were a great deal more cordial, and this lent colour to the popular belief among Conservatives at the time that the sovereign was a Radical and a Home Ruler, a belief which, incidentally, explains, though it does not excuse, the acquiescence of the Tory rank-and-file in the Whiggish policy of Mr. Balfour. The Liberals were also more tactful in their dealings with the King, and although the latter had no illusions concerning the democratic opinions of their rising hope, Mr. Lloyd George, he was able to work with them in a more friendly spirit than with the previous administration. What would have happened had he lived a few years longer, and been confronted with the House of Lords and Ulster crises, it is impossible to say, but there is no reason to suppose that Mr. Asquith would have treated him with any less consideration than he displayed towards his son and successor. In any event, he would have been spared any further dealings with Mr.

¹ In May, 1930.

Balfour, who resigned his leadership of the Conservative party in 1911 in spite of the fact that he had led it repeatedly to disaster.

When King Edward VII died the power of the Crown was certainly less than it had been for a hundred and fifty years, and possibly less than since the Wars of the Roses. The personality of the dead monarch, and the illusions that existed on the Continent concerning him, concealed to some extent the weakness of his position, and even if it be untrue that he once said, "My son will reign, but not my grandson," the words probably expressed only too accurately his fears for the future. The short interval that elapsed between his death and the outbreak of war in 1914 proved once more that the monarchy's extremity was the parties' opportunity, and the British political arena became such a bear-garden that Germany was convinced that her hour had struck. King Edward was too old a man when he came to the throne to take up the fight against the factions, and the result was that the latter made very great headway indeed during his reign. Nor was this all, for he committed the mistake of all his line in not keeping his heir fully acquainted with every aspect of public policy, and in consequence the latter had to pass several years in tutelage to the politicians before he had sufficient knowledge to assert the Royal authority effectively. In brief, King Edward loomed larger in the eyes of his contemporaries than he is likely to do in those of posterity.

It is no exaggeration to say that King George V mounted the throne in circumstances as difficult as could well be imagined, and with the additional disadvantage that until he was twenty-seven years of age he was not in the direct succession. By 1910 the factions, as has been shown, had got thoroughly out of hand, and a period of what can only be described as social and political anarchy was beginning. Every section of the community that fancied it had

a grievance sought to remedy it by force. Under the relentless pressure of Mr. Redmond the Liberal Government forced the Parliament Act on to the Statute Book, and then proceeded to secure the passage of the Home Rule Bill; this led to stormy scenes in the House of Commons, and to the formation of the Ulster Volunteers and the Curragh incident. Meanwhile, the country was repeatedly being paralyzed by strikes, and the suffragettes were proving that the women of Britain had nothing to learn from the men so far as violence was concerned. Even in comparison with the chaos of the post-war world the first four years of the reign of King George V constituted no golden age.

Yet, in spite of everything, the King, from the moment of his accession, never lost sight of the fact that the Crown symbolized the national interest, and in fair weather and foul he has worked to make the latter prevail over the parties. Among all the ministers who have served him there has not been one statesman of the first rank, and a good many of them have been at the best but lukewarm monarchists. The overthrow of so many Continental thrones has given rise to the belief that hereditary kingship is an anachronism, and the ordinary British politician, whatever the party to which he may nominally belong, treats the Crown as an effete institution which can only be tolerated in this progressive age so long as it in no way interferes with the party game as played by himself and his friends. In this respect the only difference between the Conservatives and their opponents is that the former are more prone to wave the Union Jack at their meetings, and to terminate them by singing the National Anthem, but it is difficult to believe that there is a much greater degree of truly Royalist fervour at Palace Chambers than there is in Eccleston Square. King George has thus never had any organized body of public opinion upon which he could in

the last resort rely, and therefore his triumph in these last years is the greater tribute to his own unerring skill.

Until the outbreak of the war the King exerted all his influence on the side of moderation in the Irish Question, and the extremists viewed his attitude with no inconsiderable degree of alarm.¹ He paid a visit to Dublin, where he met with a reception that proved quite conclusively that the Royal Family was as popular as ever with the mass of the Irish people, though from that day to this no advantage has ever been taken of the fact, so jealous are the politicians of the Crown, in any suggested solution of Ireland's problems. King George showed his appreciation of the Imperial importance of the monarchy by his visit to India; and if, both before and since the war, he has not followed the example of his father in making frequent visits to the Continent, he can justify himself on the score that no particular benefit accrued to his subjects from King Edward's European peregrinations: furthermore, his attitude in this respect has earned for him the distinction of being the only important person in the public life of Great Britain who does not spend a portion of each year in some delectable foreign resort, at the nation's expense, endeavouring to make the world safe for democracy.

The war aggravated the difficulties of the King, and the full story of his relations with his ministers during this period has yet to be told. Why, for instance, the latter should have wished to inflict so gratuitous an insult upon the Crown as to allow the new military formations to be termed Kitchener's Army it is not easy to understand, and the change of the name of the dynasty was an unworthy concession to popular hysteria. Indeed, the monarchy seems to have been deliberately kept in the background during the war, though whether this were due to the ministers, acting for their own ends, or to the timidity

¹ Cf. Denis Gwynn: *The Life of John Redmond*, p. 252.

of some personal adviser of the King, such as Lord Stamfordham, it is impossible in the absence of sufficient evidence to determine. As for Mr. Lloyd George, his contempt for the monarchical principle was sufficiently displayed in his refusal to allow the Imperial Family of Russia to come to England after the Revolution,¹ and the historian of the future may well wonder how at this time the country escaped becoming a republic with him as its President. Nevertheless, the nation knew where its duty lay, and the vast crowd that surged towards Buckingham Palace on the morning of November 11th, 1918, to acclaim the King was a portent which meant a great deal.

Like most of the "new dawns" since the war, that which the Armistice appeared to herald soon proved to be a false one. Indeed, the period that elapsed between November, 1918, and August, 1931, is one of the most disastrous in British history, and it is no mere coincidence that during these years the power of the Crown reached its nadir. Although the official life of a Parliament was five years, there were no less than five General Elections, of which two resulted in the return to office of a minority administration; there was a General Strike, which might easily have developed into a revolution but for the innate good sense of the British people; and there was a steady increase in the number of unemployed, for the majority of whom it was quite clear there would never again be work in Great Britain itself so long as Parliamentary democracy remained. As if these were not calamities enough there was a rebellion in Ireland which was only brought to an end by conceding to the rebels all their demands,² and by

¹ For a full account of this disgraceful incident, cf. Meriel Knowling: *The Dissolution of an Empire*.

² Subsequently, however, it was discovered that the paying of Danegeld does not get rid of the Dane, as Ethelred II had learnt nearly a thousand years before.

leaving those who had been loyal to the British connection to shift for themselves as best they might. Abroad, an unjust, and, what is worse, an injudicious, peace brought Nemesis in its train, and in spite, or because, of repeated international conferences the political, social, and economic state of the world proceeded to go from bad to worse. Democracy, having reduced the science of war to the level of a blood-bath, proved itself equally incompetent when confronted with the problems of peace.

Throughout these thirteen years the basis of successive British governments, whatever party label the latter may have attached to themselves, was Socialism. There was an unwritten understanding that the existing order should not be seriously challenged so long as the accumulated wealth of centuries, already seriously depleted by the war, was distributed in ever-increasing quantities to the proletariat, which had done nothing to create it, and only became pauperized as the result of such treatment. Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Baldwin, and Mr. MacDonald joyfully accepted office on these terms, and there was a veritable reign of unreason, during which only a few heretics called attention to the writing on the wall. Money was poured out, both by the national and local authorities, upon the most unremunerative enterprises; universal suffrage was instituted; and to live beyond one's means was taught as a patriotic duty both in the press and on the platform. No one party and no one class was specially to blame, for they all encouraged the extravagance, and they all shared in the loot. It was such an orgy as the factions had never known since the days of the Commonwealth, and the national interest was wholly forgotten. In the summer of 1931 the British people woke up one morning to find that the debauch was over, and that all that remained was a bankrupt State and a disordered Constitution.

During this period the King had an extremely difficult

part to play, and the way in which he played it showed him to be incomparably the greatest statesman in his dominions. He was not a young man when the war ended, and he had first of all to familiarize himself with the course which events were taking. The political leaders of the nation, the press, and the clergy were spouting:

Reason, philosophy, fiddledum, diddledum,
Peace and fraternity, higgledy, piggedly,

and the tide was running so strongly in favour of democracy that it would have been dangerous for the Crown to have opposed it, or even to have given the appearance of doing so. The situation, in fact, resembled that at the time of the Popish Plot, and King George adopted the policy of Charles II, hoping that the madness would pass before the damage done was irretrievable. He relaxed the old etiquette to some extent, and members of the Royal Family were present at events which had never been honoured by their presence in the past, and no official notice was taken when a section of the press made allusion to them in the same familiar manner in which it treated film-stars and tennis-players. It was 1679 over again, though longer drawn out, and the King patiently waited until the reaction set in, fully convinced of the truth of that saying of Charles I that the English are a sober people, and that sooner or later they would tire of the blandishments of the modern demagogue as their ancestors had tired of those of Shaftesbury and Oates.

As there was nothing to be done at home except to give democracy enough rope to hang itself, the King devoted himself to strengthening the position of the Crown as the one link of Empire. While the politicians were giving all the support they could to the various centrifugal influences (a task which the Whig Lord Balfour found so congenial that he emerged from his retirement to take

the lead in it at the Imperial Conference of 1926) he arranged for the series of tours undertaken by the Prince of Wales, and the Duke and Duchess of York, which brought home to the most remote of his subjects the true significance of the monarchy. Incidentally, the politicians played into his hands by consenting to the removal of the Dominions from the control of the British Parliament, for this served to stress the importance of the Crown, for no one in his senses has ever believed that Canada or Australia, and much less the Indian Princes, would owe allegiance to the President of a British Republic.

In November, 1928, it was announced that the King was seriously ill, and for some weeks he actually hovered between life and death. The effect upon the country came as a surprise even to those who were most convinced of the monarchical instincts of the British people. In a moment it was clear that the best-loved and most respected man in the Empire was its sovereign, and every class among his subjects shared the anxiety of the Royal Family as the bulletins raised or lowered its hope. There had been nothing like it since the illness of the Prince of Wales over fifty years before, and for anything in the nature of an exact parallel one must go back to 1744 when Louis XV lay at death's door at Metz. Since the Armistice many an eminent Parliamentarian had sickened and died without the nation giving him more than a passing thought, but the whole Empire was in spirit by the bedside of King George V. While the politicians had been endeavouring to rivet the attention of the public by posturing in the limelight, the King had won the latter's confidence by his unostentatious devotion to his duty and to the nation's interests.

While the King was recovering from his illness the country was going from bad to worse. A General Election in the spring of 1929 returned the Socialists to the House

of Commons as the strongest single party, but without an absolute majority, and Mr. MacDonald began his second administration, dependent upon the support of a handful of Liberals led by Mr. Lloyd George. The new ministry proceeded to squander such of the national resources as had been spared by its predecessors, and by the summer of 1931 Great Britain was on the very edge of bankruptcy. The more moderate among the ministers wished to apply the brake, but their colleagues would not hear of it, and the *impasse* appeared complete. At this moment, when the nation was vainly looking round for a Mussolini to save it from the consequences of its own, and its chosen leaders', blunders, the King stepped into the breach. When the crisis occurred he was at Balmoral, and as soon as it was announced that he was coming to London a sigh of relief went up from the whole country: the long-awaited chief had made his appearance, and in the person of the King. Once again monarchy had saved the day when democracy had failed.

Those who may be inclined to dispute this assertion would do well to reflect upon what would have happened had Great Britain been a republic in August, 1931. The President would either have been a colourless nonentity or a violent partisan. If the former, he would never have dared to adopt a definite policy of his own, and at a time when every hour was of importance if catastrophe was to be avoided, days, and probably weeks, would have been wasted in consultations with the various party leaders before a new administration could have been formed. Had the President been a partisan he would not have possessed the confidence of the nation, and as the probability is that he would have been a Socialist, his chief concern would most likely have been, not the future of the Empire, but that of his political associates. Whether King George had foreseen that such action on his part might one day

be necessary it is, of course, impossible to say, but he showed from the first that he fully realized that immediate decision was essential if the situation were to be saved. It was many a long year since a British sovereign had intervened so decisively in domestic politics, and when the country was asked to endorse his action it did so in a manner unprecedented in the national history.

The published accounts of what happened at Buckingham Palace those August¹ days of 1931 leave no doubt whatever that the formation of the National Government was primarily the work of the King. There was no new group to which he could turn, as the King of Italy had turned to the Fascists nine years before, and as all three parties were responsible for the perilous condition in which the country found itself, it was only right that all three should share the burden of restoring the situation. To have allowed Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Snowden, and Mr. Thomas to have resigned, and to have installed a purely Conservative administration, would have been to have treated these three gentlemen with an indulgence which they certainly did not deserve. It is true that the formation of a ministry which was composed of the spendthrifts of all three parties appeared at first sight to be taking too literally the old tag about the reformed poacher making the best gamekeeper, but the Crown had no choice: there was not a politician in the land who was not to some extent implicated, and the only thing the King could do was to form a composite Cabinet, and trust to himself and to his subjects to see that the erstwhile poachers did not lapse into their old habits. The sole alternative would

¹ August is the fateful month in British history. On the 1st Anne died; on the 4th the late war began for Great Britain; on the 8th occurred the death of Canning; and on the 22nd the battle of Bosworth was fought: all of them events fraught with the greatest importance for the country.

have been to have called to power some national figure, if such a one could be found, outside the ranks of the politicians altogether, but in view of the fact that no one was specially indicated it would have been a very dubious experiment, and had it been adopted the result would probably have been the same as in Spain during the government of General Primo de Rivera, when the old politicians unpatriotically refused to co-operate with the Prime Minister chosen by the King.

King George has been accused¹ of unconstitutional conduct, and the events of August, 1931, have been described as a palace revolution. In reality nothing could be further from the truth, and had His Majesty not acted as he did he would have been violating the Constitution. The settlement at the Revolution went a long way towards rendering the Crown powerless in face of the parties, but it did leave the monarchy some independent power, of which later sovereigns took advantage. The charge against the King is that he should have accepted the resignation of the Socialist Cabinet, and then sent for Mr. Baldwin to form a purely Conservative one. This accusation, needless to say, is made by Socialists of the Henderson-Lansbury persuasion, and it was brought after the Socialist rout at the General Election of 1931. Before that event the crisis was described as a "bankers' ramp," the banks being presumed to be more unpopular than the monarchy with the electorate, and therefore the more profitable to attack.

Upon every score the King acted in a perfectly constitutional manner. He believed that the only hope of restoring the situation lay in the formation of a non-party government, and from the beginning he worked to this end. Anne had always asserted the right to choose her ministers irrespective of party considerations, and King

¹ By Professor Laski in his pamphlet *The Crisis and the Constitution: 1931 and After*.

George could also cite the more recent precedent of over seven years of coalition government in his support. It is true that the course he adopted involved the break-up of the Socialist party, but the latter had proved itself to be so inimical to the national interest that it had become the duty of the monarch, the living embodiment of the nation, to cripple its powers of mischief. Above all, the King has the right to choose whom he will as Prime Minister. Custom has, in fact, generally narrowed his choice, but under the Constitution he has a perfectly free hand, and so he was quite entitled to request Mr. MacDonald to form a national ministry on non-party lines. A British monarch would only be acting unconstitutionally if he kept in office a ministry that could not obtain a majority in the House of Commons. The administration that was formed in August, 1931, carried all its measures by a sufficiency of votes, and when the General Election took place the electorate endorsed the King's action by an overwhelming majority. It was 1807 over again, and a British monarch once more showed that he was a shrewder judge both of the national interest and of his subjects' wishes than was a large part of his faithful Commons.

Chapter IV

Monarchy in France

THE old French monarchy has not, until the last few years, received fair play from the historians of France, and it has not yet even begun to receive it from those of other countries. The general view undoubtedly is that Louis XIV was a pompous tyrant who wasted the resources of his country in unnecessary wars, in the erection of costly palaces, and in the support of his numerous bastards; while Louis XV was such a degenerate that the people of France in the reign of his successor, whose Queen was little better than a wanton, could stand monarchical government no longer; and so the French Revolution came about. As for the Restoration, the July Monarchy, and the Second Empire, these represented but setbacks, due to the machinations of reactionary nobles and scheming priests, in the march of progress which began with the capture of the Bastille. In addition, innumerable novels have been written and films produced depicting the condition of the French peasantry on the eve of the Revolution as little, if anything, better than that of slaves; and that this was the actual state of affairs has become almost an article of faith among those who still believe in democracy.

It is not at all difficult to understand why this should be so. Every regime in France since 1789, with the exception of the Restoration, has paid at any rate lip-service to the principles of the Revolution, and naturally those writers who wished to curry favour with the authorities have taken the view that the Revolution was inevitable, and that the conditions existing before it were intolerable.

Just as in England the apologists of the Tudors threw so much mud at Richard III that his true features are indistinguishable to this day, so in France for the last hundred years almost every prominent historian has felt it necessary to prove his devotion to the Revolution by decrying everything and everybody that went before. Since 1789 witnessed the birth of modern democracy this fashion has rapidly spread from France to other countries, with the result that the ordinary historical textbook is little more than an organ of democratic propaganda, and successive generations are brought up in the belief that there was something noble about the French Revolution which justified all the atrocities that were committed in the course of it.

Of late there has been, in France itself, a very decided reaction against this interpretation of history. The Marquis de Roux and MM. Pierre de la Gorce, Charles Maurras, Louis Bertrand, Louis Madelin, Charles Benoist, Jacques Bainville, and Pierre Gaxotte have shown that there is another side to the picture, while the practical inconveniences of democracy are convincing an increasing number of Frenchmen that the Revolution was more of a mixed blessing than they had been led to believe. In their economic application the principles of 1789 had been attacked earlier by Georges Sorel, and his great pupil, Signor Mussolini, has definitely turned his back upon them in his organization of the Fascist State. Yet in spite of all this there are still millions of young men all over the world who are being brought up in the belief that something took place in 1789 of greater benefit to mankind than anything that had happened before, and that this earth is a happier place because Louis XVI perished upon the scaffold than it would have been had he died in the ordinary course of events in his bed at Versailles. The wells of historical truth are only too often poisoned by the

carcasses of dead theories, and so it has been with the story of the French Revolution.

In view of the fact that the events of 1789 struck a blow at the monarchical principle from which the latter has never recovered, it is necessary to realize what the French Revolution really implied. From time to time a feeling of restlessness, sometimes justified, but more often not, comes over nations, as over individuals, and induces them to revolt against the authority to which they have previously been subject. The period of Greek colonization, the civil wars in the Roman Empire in the third century, the Albigenian movement, and the Reformation are a few examples of this, as are the Renaissance and Romanticism in a slightly different sphere. The French Revolution, far from being unique, was but a disturbance of this nature. It gave full play, as did the others, to the basest instincts of mankind,¹ and it called out the noblest, but the balance was definitely upon the wrong side. It righted no wrongs that would not have been remedied in due course without the resort to violence which it occasioned, and it gave birth to that monster nationalism, which has wrought more mischief in the world than was caused by the *ancien régime*, even on the showing of the latter's most bitter opponents. "*Tous les peuples*," wrote Rousseau,² "*ont une espèce de force centrifuge, par laquelle ils agissent continuellement les uns contre les autres, et tendent à s'agrandir aux dépens de leurs voisins, comme les tourbillons de Descartes*." The Revolution weakened the authority that controlled them, and "in all Socialistic upheavals it is ever Rousseau's man who is the Typhœus under the Etna."³

To the monarchy France owes its existence, and to the ability which successive Kings displayed in absorbing the

¹ Cf. M. Minnigerode: *The Magnificent Comedy*, *passim*.

² *Contrat Social*.

³ Friedrich Nietzsche: *Thoughts out of Season*.

peoples whom they incorporated in their dominions is due that homogeneity that is at once the wonder and despair of the rest of mankind. It is, moreover, a fact of more than ordinary significance that since there has been no King in France the art of assimilation has been lost. In spite of the plebiscite that united Nice and Savoy to France in the days of the Second Empire those provinces have never been assimilated as the Franche Comté or Artois, Cerdagne or Roussillon, were assimilated in an earlier age. Alsace and Lorraine have been disaffected ever since their reunion with France at the close of the last war; a separatist movement has grown up in Brittany, and its supporters have already begun to resort to violence, on the most approved Sinn Féin lines, to call attention to their objects; and the problem of the unabsorbed Italian population in Tunis still remains to be solved.¹ The monarchy, on the other hand, could extend the frontiers of France, and within a generation or two its new subjects were as good and patriotic Frenchmen as could be desired.

The reason for this is not far to seek. The monarchy undoubtedly centralized the administration, but it did not insist upon absolute uniformity in every detail. Local customs and provincial distinctions were respected, and even encouraged, so long as they were not definitely centrifugal in their tendency, and it was not considered any proof of disloyalty to the Crown for a man to be a good Breton or a good Burgundian. Democracy abhors all distinctions, and worships uniformity, so ever since 1789 the whole machinery of the State has been used to make the citizen of Lille as much as possible like him of Marseilles. The old historic provinces were abolished in favour of departments, which to this day are regarded by those who live in them as little more than mere postal districts. The chief

¹ Cf. Arrigo Solmi: *Italia e Francia nei Problemi Attuali della Politica Europea*, pp. 63-76.

responsibility for all this rests with Napoleon I, who, not being a Frenchman himself, regarded France primarily as a recruiting-ground, and thus naturally favoured anything that tended to the simplification of the administration, for in this way the maximum number of recruits could be obtained with the minimum amount of trouble. Succeeding regimes followed in his footsteps, though for different reasons, until at the present time to advocate decentralization in any form in France is to lay oneself open to the accusation of being a reactionary. Nevertheless, this continued insistence upon uniformity is clearly weakening the country, and it may bring the Third Republic down in the end.

What the monarchy was it is not easy to realize after the lapse of so many years, and the work of so many detractors. Perhaps it is best described by M. Pierre Gaxotte when he says,¹ "*Le royaume est un par la personne du souverain, multiple par ses institutions.*" Unity in diversity was, indeed, the watchword, and probably the most illuminating illustration of the way in which this was translated into action is the attitude of the Crown at the time of the annexation of the Franche Comté in 1668. Louis XIV promised that there should be no alteration in the conditions then existing, and made the following declaration: "*S.M. promet et jure sur les Saints Évangiles qu'Elle et ses augustes successeurs les tiendront et maintiendront bien et loyalement en tous et quelconques leurs privilèges, franchises et libertés, anciennes possessions, usages, coutumes et ordonnance, et généralement qu'Elle fera tout ce qu'un Prince et Comte Palatin de Bourgogne est tenu de faire.*" As M. Gaxotte truly says, the multiplication of this example to cover the whole of France is the best method of understanding how France was governed in the days of Louis XIV and his successors.

¹ *La Révolution Française*, p. 16.

With the advent of democracy, authority has become so impersonal that, to quote M. Gaxotte once more, "*La manière dont la France monarchique s'était formée . . . donnait au pouvoir royal, théoriquement sans limites, un caractère et des bornes que, citoyens d'un État bureaucratique, napoléonien et à demi socialisé, nous soupçonnons difficilement.*" The same author then proceeds¹ to contrast it with modern times when "*l'autorité nous apparaît . . . sous les traits d'un fonctionnaire assis derrière un grillage et investi des droits les plus étendus, y compris celui de nous transformer en militaires et de nous envoyer recevoir des briques dans les émeutes et des morceaux d'acier sur les champs de batailles.*" The prestige that attached to the office of King was enormous, and one of the Napoleonic marshals² himself said that he entertained for Louis XVI sentiments of almost religious devotion. No monarch in Europe could compare with the King of France in importance, and in the monarch's greatness his subjects saw the reflection of the glory of their country. However estimable may be the President of the Republic, he is merely an official of the State, and he can never be anything else. He represents nothing, he means nothing, and these facts are universally understood. During the lifetime of the existing regime two Presidents, Marshal MacMahon and M. Millerand, have attempted to break the bonds imposed upon them, but the French people would have none of it, thereby paying an indirect tribute to the old monarchy by their refusal to respect, even if they feel compelled to tolerate, its supplanter.

The monarchy reached its highest point under the House of Bourbon, and the Kings of that dynasty were not unworthy of their office. Henry IV raised France to her old position as the leading Power in Europe from the depths to which the Wars of Religion had reduced her.

¹ *La Révolution Française*, p. 14.

² Marmont.

Louis XIII, if not a strong man, had at least the sense to keep a great minister when he found one, and he resisted all inducements to drop the pilot. Louis XIV, to whom full justice has been done by Mr. Hilaire Belloc alone among English historians, placed France in a position of pre-eminence, alike in arms and arts, which she had never known before, and was never to know again, and his conception of monarchy is contained, not in the apocryphal "*L'État, c'est moi*," but in his reference to "*le bien public pour qui seul nous sommes nés*."¹ Louis XV suffered from a lack of capable advisers, but, if lazy, he was by no means the poltroon that he is generally depicted, and had his grandson followed in his footsteps in what concerned the Parlements, the Revolution would never have occurred. As for Louis XVI, he was, like Charles I, the victim of the opposition of certain vested interests, and he trusted those who in the end were the first to betray him.²

While the monarchy stood France had no rival in Europe. It is true that she did not emerge victorious from all her wars, but even in defeat her prestige hardly suffered. She fought the most disastrous of them to place a Bourbon on the throne of Spain, and not even the military genius of Marlborough and Eugène could prevent her from achieving her object. The Seven Years' War resulted, it is true, in the loss of Canada, but two decades had not passed before France had turned the tables on her British antagonist by depriving her of the thirteen colonies in North America. Those who talk of the feebleness of Louis XV and of his grandson would do well to recollect that during their reigns no enemy came within sight of Paris, and that the old monarchy never witnessed either a

¹ Louis Bertrand: *Louis XIV*, p. 316.

² For a full account of what the monarchy meant, cf. Charles Maurras: *Enquête sur la Monarchie*, *passim*; also Pierre Gaxotte: *Le Siècle de Louis XV*.

Waterloo or a Sedan. During its last years, too, the army and navy received careful attention, and by far the larger number of the commanders who made the world ring with their names in the days of Napoleon had received their training under Louis XVI. In short, there is no greater fallacy than to suppose that the eighteenth century witnessed the steady decline of French power, which was only restored by the Revolution and the Empire.

In civilization France was the acknowledged leader of Europe, and her claim to set the tone was undisputed. When Henry IV ascended the throne Spanish influence was supreme, and the language of Spain had supplanted Latin as that in international use. Gradually French began to displace its Southern rival, and, just as the Planet King of Spain, Philip IV, paled before the magnificence of *Le Roi Soleil*, so the supremacy of the Peninsula in the arts gave way to that of France. It is true that even the Spain of Charles the Bewitched could boast a Calderón and a Murillo, but it was no longer in the van of civilization, and the primacy had definitely crossed the Pyrenees. France set the fashion in literature and art, in dress and in manners, while so commonly was French spoken by those with any pretensions to education that when the Comte de Grammont arrived in London in the reign of Charles II he found it as easy to make himself understood as if he had remained in Paris. Nor was there any sign of this influence waning until the outbreak of the Revolution, and the spell of French civilization was as potent in the days of Louis XVI as it had been in those of *Le Grand Monarque*.

Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that the enormous progress which civilization made between the end of the sixteenth century and the Revolution was directly due to the French Kings in general, and to Louis XIV in particular. Their Court, the most brilliant in the world, attracted visitors, not only from Europe, but from Africa

and the East, and the influence of Versailles can be seen in the ruins of the Summer Palace of the Manchu Emperors of China. There was not a petty German prince but felt impelled to imitate, so far as his resources would permit, the pomp of the King of France, and although this desire often led to extravagances which one can only describe as absurd,¹ yet what civilization there was in Germany in the century that followed the desolation of the Thirty Years' War owed its inspiration to France. To a lesser extent the same was true of England and Italy, and even the Highland chieftains aped the manners of the French Court.² To the foreigner, as to the Frenchman, the French King typified France, and the influence of the monarch was that of the nation as a whole. There had been nothing like it in history before, and it is doubtful if there ever will be again.

It is customary among democratic writers to maintain that Louis XIV made the Revolution inevitable, and that at his death it was merely a question of time when it would occur. This is not the view held by those who are best entitled to express an opinion;³ far from being certain at the death of Louis XIV, it was not even so at that of his successor. There was, it is true, a good deal of discontent, but it was far from being incurable, and such agitation as did take place was merely superficial, while of organized opposition to the existing system there was none, save in the Masonic Lodges. It was generally admitted that reforms were necessary, but there was no reason to suppose that they could not be effected within the framework of the traditional monarchy, which had on many an occasion

¹ The story is told of more than one princeling who provided himself with a French mistress, though rather for ornament than for use.

² Cf. J. H. Burton: *Lives of Simon, Lord Lovat, and Duncan Forbes, of Culloden*, p. 173.

³ Cf. J. Bainville: *Histoire de France*, p. 296.

proved its adaptability since the far-off days of Hugh Capet. There was criticism of this or that government measure, but the overwhelming mass of the French people had no thought of revolution in 1774.

In fact, reform was in the air, and had Louis XV lived a few years longer it would have been effected upon a sufficiently extensive scale to have rendered revolution impossible. That monarch, above all other Kings of France, has been the subject of continued misrepresentation, and the prurient minds of nineteenth-century historians have preferred to gloat over his relations with Madame de Pompadour and Madame du Barry rather than conduct an impartial enquiry into his policy. That Louis had many weaknesses which would have prevented him from being held up as a model in the average Sunday School cannot be denied, but in his defence it must be admitted that the France of the Regency of Philip, Duc d'Orléans, was hardly an academy of the sterner virtues; also he was inclined to laziness, and to leave the initiative to others, but as that is the test of a good King according to the democrats, the latter can hardly attack him on that score without laying themselves open to the charge of illogicality. On the other hand, Louis had what his grandson lacked—namely, a full sense of the authority inherent in his position, and when occasion arose he did not hesitate to use it. In short, if by nature he was inclined to let matters slide, when they showed a tendency to go too far he would act, and when he died the power of the Crown was far greater than it had been at the termination of the Regency.

In 1771 Louis XV, on the advice of the Chancellor, Maupeou, suppressed the Parlement de Paris and the Provincial Parlements. These bodies, representative of vested interests rather than of public opinion, had grown in strength in the days of the Regency, and throughout the reign of Louis XV they had opposed a firm resistance to

every attempt at the reform of the administration. They claimed, like the opponents of Charles I of England, to be a bulwark of the popular rights against the Crown, but the French people were not deceived, and even Voltaire sided with the Church against them. The Parlements voiced the sentiments of the upper middle class, and they did everything they could to obstruct legislation likely to affect its interests adversely. Choiseul had tried to govern with them by making a sacrifice of the Jesuits, and by promoting their members to lucrative appointments, but it was all to no purpose: the appetite of the Parlements merely grew, so Louis changed his ministers,¹ and made an end of them. In their place were substituted *Conseils Supérieurs*, and a central court of justice was set up in Paris, composed of seventy-five nominees of the Crown. Throughout the length and breadth of France not a dog barked at this exercise of the Royal authority eighteen years before the outbreak of the "inevitable" Revolution.

For the next three years considerable progress was made in effecting the reforms which the existence of the Parlements had hitherto rendered impossible. Taxation was placed upon a more equitable basis, and a programme of legislation was drawn up which later served as the foundation for the more commendable enactments of the Empire. In this connection it may be noted that Lebrun, who was successively Third Consul, Arch-Treasurer of the Empire, and Duke of Piacenza, was secretary to the Chancellor Maupeou. In this Louis XV was faithful to the tradition of monarchy in all times and in all places to safeguard the national interest. The Crown, in suppressing the Parlements, acted in the best interests of France, for in no other way was it possible to bring about the reforms which were necessary. Nor can it be said that Louis behaved in a pre-

¹ Choiseul's advocacy of immediate war with Great Britain was a second reason for that minister's fall.

capitate manner, for he had tried for years to induce the Parlements to co-operate with him, and it was only when he found that there was no hope of this that he sent them about their business. In more ways than one the *coup* of 1771 resembles that of Charles II of England in 1681, and in both cases the reigning monarch marked out a path which his successor unfortunately failed to follow.

Louis XVI had not that taste for the exercise of authority which his grandfather knew so well how to display in case of emergency, and any appeal to his sense of justice evoked a ready response. The policy of reform which had been pursued during the last years of the old King's reign had alarmed many vested interests, and these united to take advantage, for their own ends, of the young monarch's lack of experience. They saw in the re-establishment of the Parlements the safest guarantee against any alteration in the existing system, and so they persuaded Louis that his predecessor's action had been that of a tyrant. The King yielded, the Parlements were restored, and the Revolution became inevitable. The best schemes of Turgot had to be abandoned before the opposition of interested parties, and it gradually became clear that only the most drastic remedies would suffice. In short, the old French monarchy fell, not because it was too tyrannical, but because it was too timid; not because it was too monarchical, but because it was not monarchical enough. Had Louis XVI followed in the footsteps of the Bourbons who preceded him that dynasty would be reigning in Paris to-day.

Moreover, it was in a rich, not in a poor, France that the Revolution broke out.¹ The myth of a poverty-stricken country goaded by its misery into revolt against a corrupt

¹ Cf. Pierre Gaxotte: *La Révolution Française*, p. 29 et seq. An excellent account of life in eighteenth-century France is contained in two novels of M. Péron-Cury, *La Rose de Chambord*, and its sequel, *La Vengeance de M. de la Neuville*.

and frivolous Court has long been exploded. It is not nations in the last stages of penury who rise in rebellion against their rulers, but those who are prosperous. England in 1641 and Spain in 1931 were richer than they had ever been before, and so it was with France in 1789. The eighteenth century had been one of continued progress in the sphere of economics, and there is much truth in the statement that the French peasant rose not because he was worse, but because he was better, off than any other in Europe. The government, owing to the fact that the clock had been put back by the recall of the Parlements, was poor, but the country was rich, and the situation could have been restored by any financier of even moderate ability had he not been certain of being thwarted at every turn by factions, firmly entrenched, who cared nothing for the nation's good so long as their own pockets and privileges were untouched. What the Whigs were to Charles II of England, the Parlements and their supporters were to Louis XVI.

There were other, if more indirect, causes for the fall of the monarchy. The latter had arrayed against it most of the men of letters of the day, and in particular the group known as the Encyclopædists. Like the Liberals of a later age, these last preferred every country to their own, and those who were loudest in their abuse of the existing order in France were only too ready to receive the bounty of the King of Prussia or of the Russian Empress. A great many of those who sneered at the French Court had no other desire than to obtain a reputation as advanced thinkers (a common-foible of intellectuals), and revolution was far from their minds, but, although they did not know it, they were actively engaged in cutting their own throats, like a pig swimming, just as their spiritual descendants are doing in so many countries to-day. What exactly they proposed to set up in the place of the system they were attacking

few of them stopped to think, and when the crash came the revolutionaries took little notice of them or of their speculations. The one exception was Rousseau, who aimed at revolution from the start, and was determined to avenge himself upon society for the contempt with which the latter very rightly treated him. Still, it was a mistake on the part of the monarchy to have allowed the intellectuals to join the ranks of its opponents, and the lesson is one which no King can ignore with impunity.

It was at this time, too, that the Secret Societies, such as the Freemasons, began to exert their baneful influence upon European politics.¹ They had existed for many years, possibly even for centuries, before 1789, but the union of throne and altar had been strong enough to resist all their efforts. Now, in the weakness of the one they saw their chance of pulling down the other, and so obtained that influence which has been the cause of so much trouble in different parts of the world ever since. Their exact part in the French Revolution is still somewhat obscure, and they did not appear as openly as they have done on subsequent occasions, but in that catastrophe, as in every upheaval since, Freemasonry was responsible for a great deal of the mischief. The war against Christianity began in its most acute form in 1789, and it began with a blow struck at the monarchical principle.

The French Revolution was one of the greatest disasters that have ever afflicted mankind, for it resulted in social, political, and moral anarchy being extolled as a virtue by the name of democracy, and there is not a country in the world which has not suffered from its effects. In France itself it represented the triumph of faction, just as the Commonwealth had done in seventeenth-century England. After the Terror there was a natural reaction, and it was

¹ Cf. Vicomte Léon de Poncins: *The Secret Powers behind the Revolution*, pp. 29-48.

particularly unfortunate that at this moment there should have appeared upon the scene such a megalomaniac as Napoleon Bonaparte. What the circumstances of the time required was a General Monk, who should restore the monarchy, and give the country peace after the revolutionary storms which it had experienced. Instead there appeared the Corsican, who, while undoubtedly a great military genius, imported into French public life the vendettas of his own island, and left France a legacy of disaster from which it appears improbable that she will ever now recover.

The tenderness with which Napoleon is still regarded by historians is quite inexplicable. After his fall it was customary to denigrate him, but a reaction soon set in, and flattery is still the order of the day. If it is difficult to understand such an attitude on the part of foreigners, who have no excuse for being other than impartial, it is still harder where the French themselves are concerned. It is true that Napoleon won the most notable victories of all time, but at the price of the depopulation of France, while in the political field he made possible the unification of Germany and Italy, a work that was completed by his nephew, which has deprived France of her freedom of action in Europe. At home he is acclaimed as having terminated the Revolution, the force of which had already spent itself, while in actual fact he put the country into a strait-jacket which has hampered her movements ever since. As for the man's personal character, it was sufficiently revealed on the occasion when he sent his soldiers to their death merely that his mistress of the moment might witness an attack.¹

The fact that Napoleon provided himself with a crown,

¹ Cf. J. Holland Rose: *The Personality of Napoleon*, p. 19, and Las Cases: *Mémorial*, vol. i, p. 202. For an excellent summary of Napoleon's character, cf. Algernon Cecil: *Metternich*, pp. 37-38.

and endeavoured to make the Imperial dignity hereditary in his family, has tended to blind posterity to the fact that he was neither more nor less than a dictator, and that his government suffered from all the disadvantages attendant upon regimes which depend upon the sword alone. That he came to believe that he was necessary to the very existence of France there can be no doubt, but his attitude towards her was very different from that of Louis XIV. He would never have said, at any rate with sincerity or in his later years, that he had been born to serve the public interest: he may have worked in his early days for France, though as a youth he had hated her, but it was never for France alone, always for France and Napoleon; soon it became Napoleon and France, and ere long it was merely Napoleon. Against this mighty world-conqueror, the great Emperor of the French, was set another figure, that of Louis XVIII, Most Christian King of France and Navarre, and as the contest between them was but another phase of the eternal struggle between right and might, it is not without interest to see what manner of man was the representative of the old French monarchy.

Louis Xavier Stanislas was born at Versailles on November 17th, 1755, the third son of the Dauphin and of Marie Josephine of Saxony, and he was at once created Comte de Provence. During the period of his childhood he appeared to have but little chance of ever succeeding to the throne, for not only was Louis XV in middle life, but the Dauphin was a young man, and he himself had two elder brothers, the Ducs de Bourgoyne and de Berry. Death, however, invariably took a heavy toll of the members of the French Royal Family, and upon the accession of Louis XVI the Comte de Provence became Monsieur, the heir presumptive to the throne. It was not long before he was made to realize that there were disadvantages as well as privileges attaching to the position. The factious conduct of the

brothers of Louis XIII and Louis XIV had not unnaturally inspired those monarchs and their successors with an almost Turkish suspicion of an heir presumptive, and the hostility between father and son which was traditional in the House of Hanover had its counterpart in that of Bourbon in the jealousy which existed between brother and brother. Monsieur was not, indeed, bowstrung as he would have been at Constantinople, but he was never allowed to play any part in public life, and, although official appointments were showered upon him, he was given to understand that it was only upon the express condition that he should treat them as sinecures. Louis XVI was a good-natured man, and had he merely consulted his own inclinations he might have broken with precedent in this matter; but he was dominated by the Queen, and between Marie Antoinette and the Comte de Provence there hardly existed even the outward forms of civility, let alone any feelings of cordiality.

The fact was that Monsieur was a convinced opponent of the Austrian alliance, which was universally disliked in France, and which, in common with the majority of his fellow-countrymen, he believed to have been responsible for the disasters of the Seven Years' War. Of this alliance the Queen was the embodiment, and it was thus only natural that she should regard with the utmost suspicion the brother-in-law who opposed it so strongly. Marie Antoinette was not the woman to allow her feelings to remain unknown, and she exerted all her influence over her husband to prevent any departure from the traditional reserve which marked the relations of the King of France with his brother. The Comte de Provence was not long in discovering that he was to be deprived of any share in the administration, and the enforced seclusion to which he was thus subjected had a profound influence upon the development of his character. Sixty years later Charles X

told¹ the Marquis de Villeneuve of the restrictions which were imposed upon the Comte de Provence and himself during the reign of their brother. He recalled how he had been appointed colonel of a Guard regiment at the age of sixteen, and how, with all the ardour of youth, he had at first devoted himself to his profession, until one day Maurepas, the minister of Louis XVI, said to him: "*Vous avez donc bien de l'attrait pour manœuvres, Monseigneur? Cela ne convient pas à un prince. Tenez, amusez-vous à autre chose; faites des dettes, et nous les payerons.*" When France came to the aid of the United States in the War of American Independence, both the Comte de Provence and the Comte d'Artois sought permission to join the expedition which was being fitted out for America, but Louis XVI refused to give it, though he did eventually allow the Comte d'Artois to take part in the siege of Gibraltar.

It would be manifestly unfair to lay the whole blame for this state of affairs upon Louis XVI, or even upon the Queen, and the real villains of the piece were the ministers, as the attitude of Maurepas clearly shows. In all times and in all countries the politicians use every endeavour to prevent the members of the reigning family from taking any active part in public life, and so it was in France in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The effect of this policy upon the two brothers was very different, for whereas the Comte d'Artois complied with the advice of Maurepas, Monsieur was driven in upon himself, and if he did not conspire, he certainly did aspire. His aspirations had a profound effect upon the monarchical cause in France, and in view of the fact that the future Louis XVIII has generally been so absurdly under-rated by British historians, it is necessary to treat in some detail the career of the man who was, at the age of fifty-nine, called upon to

¹ Marquis de Villeneuve: *Charles X et Louis XIX en Exil*, p. 94 et seq.

repair the damage done by the Revolution of the First Empire.

The birth of a Dauphin in 1781, and of the Duc de Normandie, later the ill-fated Louis XVII, four years later, removed Monsieur far from the succession to the throne, but it in no way lessened his ambition to control the destinies of France, and it was about this time that he made the acquaintance of a very remarkable woman, whose influence upon him was considerable. Anne de Caumont was three years older than the Comte de Provence, whom she probably met for the first time when she was appointed a lady-in-waiting to the Comtesse de Provence in 1779, and three years previous to this she had married the Comte de Balbi, who was at that time Colonel of the *Régiment de Bourbon*. The Comte was one of those complaisant husbands who are always to be found in the higher walks of life, and of which the eighteenth century was particularly prolific; indeed, he appears only to have taken exception to the behaviour of his wife when he was already on the verge of insanity, and this attitude was generally regarded by his friends as proof of the malady. The intercourse between Monsieur and the Comtesse de Balbi was not wholly concerned with political affairs, but it was not by any means a mere *liaison* in the ordinary sense of the term.

Madame de Balbi first of all inspired her lover with a renewed self-confidence, and she brought him to realize that reforms were necessary. He had much of his grandfather, Louis XV, about him, and had he succeeded to the throne instead of his elder brother, he would never have made the mistake of allowing the Parlements to meet again. When Louis XVI convoked the Assemblée of Notables, the Comte de Provence, largely as a result of the influence of his mistress, placed himself among those who demanded reform, and for a time he was closely asso-

ciated with Mirabeau. His hope undoubtedly was to become Regent, while the policy which he intended to pursue in that event is sufficiently indicated by his statement to the Commune of Paris that "the Royal authority should be the bulwark of the authority of the nation." Events, however, had got beyond the control of the Crown or Mirabeau, while the Favras *affaire* (a plot by the Marquis de Favras to liberate the King), in which he was accused of being implicated, rendered Monsieur too suspect to allow of his schemes coming to fruition. It was not until twenty years had elapsed that he was to have an opportunity of putting his political ideas into practice, but he never forgot the teaching of Madame de Balbi, and she is therefore entitled to no small share of the credit for the reconstruction of France after the fall of Napoleon. It was she who first brought out in him those qualities which induced Lamartine to say that if France "does not place him in the rank of her greatest men, she will, at least, place him in the rank of the ablest and wisest of her Kings."¹

The course of the Revolution so alarmed the Comte de Provence that he began to think of following the example of his younger brother, Charles, and of escaping from France while there was yet time, but other counsels prevailed, and he decided to remain in Paris. So much has been written of his alleged selfishness that his attitude on this occasion calls for special notice. He knew that after the execution of the Marquis de Favras there was no future for him in French politics, and the Comte d'Artois was beseeching him to put himself at the head of the *émigrés*; yet he preferred to run all the risks attendant upon a continued residence in Paris rather than desert the King, and when he did make his escape it was not until

¹ *History of the Restoration of Monarchy in France*, bk. 44, sect. xxvii.

Louis XVI had determined upon a similar action. He first of all went to Coblenz, and subsequently he visited Italy, Russia, and Sweden, before finally taking up his residence at Hartwell, in Buckinghamshire, where he was living when the call came to him to ascend the throne of his ancestors. The record of these wanderings belongs solely to the biography of Louis XVIII, but some account must be given of his political views during this period, because, like the influences to which he was subject in his earlier years, they left their mark upon the history of monarchy in France.

The Comte de Provence was at Hamm, in Westphalia, when he heard of the execution of his brother. The immediate effect of this tragedy was to persuade him of the futility of all concession, but further reflection convinced him that if the principle of democracy was to be fought successfully, it could only be by having recourse, not only to arms, but to another principle—namely, that of legitimacy. In the Declaration of Calmar he announced this doctrine to the world when he reproached the monarchs of Europe for their complacent attitude towards Napoleon: “*Jamais on n’opposa le droit au crime, le successeur de trente rois à des tyrans éphémères, la Légimité à la Révolution.*” In the hands of Talleyrand this was to prove an extremely effective weapon.

Earlier still, in June, 1795, when he was at Verona, the news had reached him of the death of his nephew, and consequently of his own accession to his shadowy throne, and he had then issued a Declaration which must be quoted because it so well states the case for the traditional French monarchy: “In depriving you of a King who has only reigned in fetters, but whose infancy promised a worthy successor to the best of Kings, the inscrutable decrees of Providence have transmitted to us with the crown the necessity of snatching it from the hands of revolt, and

the duty of saving the country, which a disastrous revolution has placed upon the declivity of ruin. A terrible experience has but too well enlightened you on your misfortunes and on their causes. Impious and factious men, after having seduced you by lying declarations and by deceitful promises, have drawn you into irreligion and revolt. From that moment a deluge of calamities has poured upon you from all parts. You were unfaithful to the God of your fathers; and this God, justly irritated, has made you feel the weight of His anger. You were rebels to the authority that He had established to govern you, and a frightful despotism, and an anarchy not less cruel, succeeding each other by turns, have torn you incessantly with a still increasing fury. Your property became the prey of robbers the moment the throne became the prey of usurpers. Servitude and tyranny invaded you, when the Royal authority ceased to cover you with its ægis. Property, safety, and liberty, all disappeared with monarchical government. You must return to that holy religion which had conferred upon France the blessings of Heaven. You must re-establish that government which, during fourteen centuries, was the glory of France, and the delight of the French nation; which had made of your country the most flourishing of kingdoms, and of yourselves the happiest of peoples."

Chapter V

Monarchy in France (continued)

THE aim of Louis XVIII, upon returning to Paris at the end of his long exile, was to nationalize the monarchy and to royalize France. Both were formidable tasks, but both had to be accomplished if the House of Bourbon was ever again to be securely seated upon the French throne. The lapse of two decades had made the King a complete stranger to his subjects, and although the vast majority of the latter, more particularly after their bitter experiences during the Hundred Days, welcomed the return of the traditional monarchy, it was clear from the beginning that the period of adjustment would not be an easy one. The tragedy was that the King himself was verging upon old age, and that the time at his disposal to do what was necessary must obviously be short. It was not, as in England in 1660, merely a case of passing a sponge over an interregnum, for the Revolution in France had gone far deeper than in Great Britain, while the Empire still had many partisans, and the fallen dynasty of the Bonapartes was always there to serve as a rallying-point for the disaffected. No serious effort was ever made to re-establish the Protectorate in England, but there was a Second, and, but for the death of the Prince Imperial, there might well have been a Third, Empire in France, and this difference explains why the work of the restored monarchy on one side of the Channel was so much more difficult than on the other.

Then, again, the French Revolution had been social, as well as political, in its nature. It is true that there was a considerable transfer of property in England between the

years 1640 and 1660, but it was not as the result of the deliberate policy of those who held office at that time; rather was it due to the impoverishment of the Royalist gentry, either as the result of their efforts on behalf of the King or of the fines which the Commonwealth imposed upon them, which caused them to sell their estates. In France there had been a general division of landed property (personal property, of which more than one revolutionary possessed a good deal, was not touched), and so the restored monarchy found itself in the same position as the two Catholic sovereigns of England after the Reformation, Mary I and James II—that is to say, regarded with a considerable amount of suspicion by the new possessors of the soil. This economic upheaval had its natural social consequences, and the triumphant *bourgeoisie*, particularly that portion of it which was feminine, had no mind to yield pride of place to the nobility who had returned in the wake of the Royal Family.

Lastly, there was the religious problem. The cause of throne and altar was one, but the former was far stronger than the latter, and it had to suffer for the latter's weakness. Organized Christianity had not yet recovered from the blows it received during the Revolution, and in France the Church was little more than an imposing *façade*. The higher clergy were recruited from the best of the old aristocracy, while the lower could be relied upon to display that devotion to duty which has always been the glory of the French priesthood, but they all suffered from the great defect that they were quite out of touch with contemporary France, from which many of them had been absent for twenty years. Even at the death of Louis XVIII it was estimated¹ that not more than one per cent. of those who left college was a practising Catholic, while even

¹ Cf. H. de Riancey: *Histoire de l'Instruction Publique en France*, vol. ii, pp. 379-381.

among the cadets at St. Cyr, chosen from families renowned for their devotion to Church and King, it was the definite exception to be devout. Louis fully realized the weakness of the Church, but his brother did not, and the consequences to the monarchy were extremely serious. In short, the religious question was one that could not be ignored, but whatever attitude the Restoration adopted towards it was certain to prove to the detriment of the throne.

The Royal Family itself was attenuated as a result of its sufferings. The King had no sons, and of his brother's male offspring, the elder, the Duc d'Angoulême, who had married his cousin, the sister of Louis XVII, was childless, and in 1814 the younger, the Duc de Berry, was unmarried. There was, it is true, the cadet branch of Orléans, but at this time no one thought of the son of Philippe *Egalité*, to whom even the title of Royal Highness was denied, as the successor to the throne of St. Louis. The Condé branch of the Bourbons still survived in the persons of two old men, but since the murder of the Duc d'Enghien it had been only a withered stump. There was no young and gallant prince, no Charles II or Alfonso XII, round whom Royalist sentiment could gather, and when the Duc de Bordeaux, *l'enfant du miracle*, was born it was too late. It was a restoration of old men that took place in France in 1814, and that in itself was distasteful to the French people, who were not content to see their country a gerontocracy until the days of the Third Republic.

The evil that French regimes do has a habit of living after them, while the good is forgotten, and in the case of the Restoration its sins were those of omission. After the tyranny of the Empire public opinion was demanding liberty, and Louis XVIII responded with the *Charte*, which provoked the sneers of Chateaubriand.¹ The *Charte* was the most Liberal Constitution in Europe at the time,

¹ Cf. *De la Monarchie selon la Charte*.

and there was a great deal more liberty in France under Louis *le désiré* than there was in contemporary England under the ministry of Lord Liverpool, or, it may be added, than there is in France of the Third Republic. This, however, cannot disguise the fact that a great error was committed in not going back upon the Napoleonic centralization. It has already been shown how the old monarchy managed to combine absolutism with a very considerable degree of provincial autonomy, and a reasonable measure of decentralization might well have rendered the Three Glorious Days impossible, by ranging the provinces against the capital. The chief reason, it need hardly be said, why no change was made was the opposition of the Napoleonic bureaucracy, whom the existing state of affairs suited very well indeed. It required more than an elderly gentleman of sixty to deal effectively with *messieurs les ronds-de-cuir*, as is proved by the fact that no measure of decentralization has been enacted to this day.

A further mistake was the neglect of the aristocracy. Louis XVIII reverted at once to the policy of Louis XIV, and kept the nobility round the Court. In the days of the *Grand Monarque*, when the memory of the Fronde was still fresh, this was exceedingly sound strategy, but it was no longer necessary at the time of the Restoration. What was required was rather to strengthen the position of the aristocracy in the country as much as possible, for all danger of it turning against the throne had long since passed away. With the Church weak, and the army tainted with Bonapartism, the nobility were the most reliable supporters of the monarchy. Louis, however, could not break with the traditions of his ancestors, and, with a few exceptions, the aristocracy struck no deep roots during the Restoration. At the same time, the loyalty of the French nobility, save for a handful of trimmers, to the monarchy was unquestioned, and it is in marked contrast with that

of the English in 1688 and the Spanish in 1931. There has been no disposition on the part of the great aristocratic houses of France to worship at the shrine of democracy, and if these are sorry times for nobility, the French has at any rate the consolation of knowing that it has never abandoned its principles.

It was the misfortune of the Restoration that the most influential minister of its early years was a man who did not realize the position of the Crown in post-revolutionary France. Decazes had served the Empire, and he never fully appreciated the difference between dictatorship and hereditary monarchy. Furthermore, he was by training a bureaucrat, and although he had no love for Napoleon he liked the Napoleonic State. He gained the ear of the King soon after the latter's return, and ever after Louis treated him more like a son than a minister, until he was compelled, after the murder of the Duc de Berry, to get rid of him, when Decazes was sent as ambassador to London. There can be no doubt that Decazes served to the very best of his ability what he conceived to be the interests of his master, and it was his misfortune rather than his fault that his zeal did infinitely more harm than good. He certainly rallied a good many Liberals to the support of the throne, but he alienated as many Royalists from King Louis personally, and by his attitude towards the *Chambre Introuvable* he did a great deal to make possible the events of 1830.

This assembly had been elected in the height of the reaction against the result of Napoleon's return from Elba, and it was thus far further to the Right than was pleasing to Decazes and those who thought with him. Yet its policy was more suited to the needs of France than that of any Chamber that has been elected since, and it is a safe surmise that if it had had its way not only would French history in the nineteenth century have been far less stormy,

but that the heirs of St. Louis would have been on the throne of France to-day. The views of the majority were well put by Vitrolles:¹ "*Elle ne voulait point détruire la Charte, mais elle voulait que la Chambre des Paris devînt la source d'une noblesse indépendante, que la clergé fut propriétaire et non salarié, que des assemblées provinciales réglassent les intérêts locaux, que les arts et métiers fussent reconstitués en corporations.*" In short, this reactionary *Chambre Introuvable*, which for more than a century has been held up to the execration of succeeding generations, was aiming at the creation of that very Corporate and Ethical State which, in this fourth decade of the twentieth century, is everywhere being adopted as the only satisfactory defence of civilization against revolution. The so-called reactionaries of 1816 were, as those who are so labelled often prove to be, merely realists in advance of their time.

The dissolution of the *Chambre Introuvable* was the work primarily of Decazes,² and the Right had its revenge on him four years later when the Duc de Berry was murdered. This vendetta within the Royalist ranks was responsible for a great deal of the trouble that was to follow, and Decazes, though unwittingly, divided the forces that supported the monarchy. Yet, even so, the throne was so securely established that when Louis XVIII died in 1824 his brother, the Comte d'Artois, succeeded as Charles X without the least sign of opposition. In no small measure this was due to the ability of Louis himself, who possessed a shrewdness which, it must be confessed, was not shared by some of his immediate relatives. In particular, he took care not to alienate the intellectuals and other leaders of public opinion, and in the light of subsequent events it is

¹ Marquis de Roux: *La Restauration*, p. 147. Cf. also Pierre de la Gorce: *La Restauration: Louis XVIII*, pp. 63-64 and 317.

² Cf. E. Daudet: *Louis XVIII et le Duc Decazes*, p. 143 et seq.

interesting to note that Lamartine served in his body-guard, that Guizot was one of his ministers, and that Victor Hugo was an ardent legitimist. Abroad, too, the prestige of monarchical France was raised, and the spectacle of the French arms victorious under the *drapeau blanc* in the very country, Spain, where they had met with disaster under the Imperial eagles was more than a little significant.

The real tragedy of Louis XVIII was that he was succeeded by Charles X. Brothers rarely make satisfactory successors, for they are usually of much the same age as their predecessors, and so cannot become the centre of those hopes which public opinion always likes to entertain of a new monarch. Owing largely to the blundering statesmanship of Decazes, the Comte d'Artois had become associated in the minds of a considerable number of his subjects with the blackest reaction, though how little he deserved the reputation will be shown. So far as his personal character was concerned, he had a much better claim to be regarded as the First Gentleman of Europe than his Guelph contemporary in England, and Leopold I of the Belgians, assuredly no gentle critic of the elder branch of the House of Bourbon, wrote¹ of him that he was "an honest man, a kind friend, an honourable master, sincere in his opinions, and inclined to do everything that is right." Quite naturally, the murder of his younger son had made him extremely fearful of any further concessions to the Left, for he had convinced himself that the assassination had taken place in consequence of the Liberal policy of Decazes. In actual fact, Louvel, the murderer of the Duc de Berry, does not appear to have had any associates, but those who criticize Charles X most severely would do well to reflect that in addition to being the Most Christian King he was also a parent who had lost a beloved child.

¹ *The Letters of Queen Victoria: First Series*, vol. i.

The critics of monarchs too often forget that the latter are human beings.

The reign of Charles X was as prosperous as that of his brother, but there were certain forces working against him which he and his ministers did not understand. The first of these was the press; and as evidence of its condition at this time the King of the Belgians, certainly no enemy to liberty, may well be cited: ¹ "If all the editors of the papers in the countries where the liberty of the press exists were to be assembled, we should have a crew to which you would not confide a dog that you would value, still less your honour and reputation." In an age when circulation, rather than political influence, is the goal of journalism it is difficult to reconstruct the state of affairs that existed a century ago when newspapers were a novelty, and were actually read from cover to cover; yet there can be no doubt that the most formidable opponents of Charles X were the *Constitutionnel* and the *Journal des Débats*.

The King and his ministers were at a loss to know how to deal with this new and unwelcome phenomenon. They had no experience either of their own, or of other governments, to guide them, and so they did not confer any honours upon the proprietors of the newspapers in question, nor did they attempt to persuade them to modify their opposition by buying advertisement space upon a large scale. Instead, they resorted to the primitive method of suspension, so popular with the present Spanish Republic, with the result that public sympathy went to the paper concerned, and the monarch was deemed a tyrant. The record of the relations of Charles X with the press is little short of pathetic in the light of the fuller knowledge of to-day, and it reminds one of the bull in the arena, goaded to fury by the *banderillas*, but lacking the skill to use its strength to put an end to the *matador*. Unfor-

¹ *The Letters of Queen Victoria: First Series*, vol. i.

tunately, too, no effort was made to effect decentralization, though it must be admitted that this would not have been easy, for there never again was so monarchist an assembly as the *Chambre Introuvable*. Still, a definite policy of this nature alone could have saved the throne, and it would not have been so easy for the Opposition press to attack, while it would have enabled the government to take the offensive, and carry the war into the enemy's camp.

Another force that operated against the Restoration was the Romantic Movement. The decay of the old classical spirit in literature was closely connected with the spread of democratic ideas, and practically all the leaders of the new movement were Liberals.¹ The connection between letters and politics has always been very close in France, and as the restored monarchy naturally looked back to the *grand siècle* of Louis XIV, so those who were in revolt against the literary standards of that age were ready to oppose any system based upon the political ideas of that time. Actually, of course, society in that mediæval period which roused the admiration of so many of the Romantics was infinitely more rigid than in the reign of Charles X, but any stick was good enough to use against the existing order. No scientific study of the Middle Ages was made until a much later date, and Romanticism was an excuse for loose thinking, and, in a good many cases, for loose living as well. As for the "noble savages" to whom not a few members of the new school directed their attention, they were even more the victims of taboos and conventions than the citizens of mediæval Europe, and were strange heroes for the respectable middle class, who showed their

¹ Cf. Douglas Jerrold in *The Criterion*, vol. xii, no. xlvii, pp. 224-225: "The classical tradition, still dominant at the end of the eighteenth century, has faded before the romantic movement, which derives its inspiration, not from that which, being common to all, unites all, but from that which, being individual to each, separates each man from his neighbour."

zeal for liberty by sending their employees to die on the barricades at the bidding of authors and journalists. The Romantics have, indeed, a great deal for which to answer, for not only did they weaken that classical spirit which characterizes European civilization at its best, but the extremes to which they went precipitated the inevitable reaction of Realism. This latter produced Zola, who, as M. Léon Daudet so truly says,¹ "from the outset, made Truth his god and enshrined her, pen in hand, between the manure heap and the morgue." His influence upon the literature of the world is very marked at the present day, and much to its detriment, while for all this the Romantic Movement is primarily responsible.

The forces operating, either directly or indirectly, against Charles X were thus considerable, and the King made the mistake of believing that a success in the international field would suffice to retrieve the situation at home. This belief is a common error of governments, and just as the Treaty of Westphalia had not prevented the Fronde, or that of Versailles the French Revolution, so the conquest of Algiers, and the projected annexation of the Left bank of the Rhine and of Belgium, did not suffice to save Charles X. As the man best fitted to pursue this policy Prince Jules de Polignac, then ambassador in London, was summoned to form a ministry. From the first, Polignac fell foul of the Chamber, which he accordingly dissolved; the elections, however, held in June and July, went against him, and of the 428 deputies returned 274 were members of the Opposition. The King's reply was to take advantage of Article XIV of the *Charte*, which empowered him to make ordinances and regulations necessary for the security of the realm, and to issue the famous *Ordonnances*.

In view of the misrepresentation of the July Revolution

¹ *Souvenirs des Milieux Littéraires, Politiques, Artistiques et Médicaux.*

to be found in the works of most historians it is necessary to consider these *Ordonnances* rather closely.¹ One of them established a definite censorship of the press, and in view of the fact that France was at war in Algeria, and that several newspapers had published information calculated to assist the enemy, this measure does not appear oppressive to the modern mind. Another dissolved the new Chamber, which had not yet met. A third fixed fresh elections for the beginning of September, and a fourth altered the franchise by which the new deputies were to be elected. In connection with this last, it is to be noted that in 1815 Louis XVIII had changed several articles of the *Charte*, including those which fixed the number and the age of the deputies, without arousing any protest against his action. Furthermore, when Polignac had prosecuted the *Drapeau Blanc* for saying that the King could alter the *Charte* by decree, the courts had held that this was an arguable proposition.

It is not easy to account for the fury which these *Ordonnances* have aroused among historians. They would certainly not have provoked a revolution at the time they were issued had the ministry taken reasonable precautions to prevent disorder, and it is difficult to regard them as unconstitutional. The German Republic was for years governed by Presidential decree in virtue of an article in the Weimar Constitution that allowed the President to take such action in time of emergency as he might think fit. The government of republican Spain has not scrupled to suppress, for weeks at a time, every newspaper that has dared to criticize it. Yet had Charles X sent his guards into the Chamber of Deputies, and had everyone there been massacred, the historians could hardly have given

¹ Cf. also J. Bainville: *Histoire de France*, pp. 452-454; Marquis de Roux: *La Restauration*, pp. 313-343; and P. de la Gorce: *La Restauration: Charles X*, pp. 274-302.

him a worse reputation. The King acted perfectly constitutionally, and had his ministers been normally competent all would have been well: he certainly never strained the Constitution to suit his own ends as, for example, those great democratic statesmen Dr. Brüning, Señor Azaña, and M. Venizelos have done without raising the ire of contemporary Liberals.

Had the King's ministers been even ordinarily efficient it is almost certain that there would have been very little trouble, even in Paris. As it was, not a single precaution had been taken. Charles himself, believing that Polignac knew his business, went off for a day's hunting. The acting War Minister, and Marshal Marmont, who commanded the Guards, knew nothing of the *Ordonnances* until they read them in the newspaper; the officer commanding the Paris district was away taking a cure; and the Prefect of Police was only informed of what was intended the night before. The garrison of Paris had been reduced to a minimum, and consisted of one regiment of Swiss, four regiments of the Guard, four of the Line, a squadron of Lancers and of Cuirassiers, and the *gendarmérie*; in all, 10,000 men, with a few rounds apiece, and most of their officers on leave. The bulk of the French army, including the other regiments of the Guard, was in the north, watching the progress of events in Belgium, where popular feeling against the Dutch was running high. As if this were not enough, no serious attempt was made to enforce the *Ordonnances*, and the Opposition papers duly appeared full of protests against them. Even so, there was no immediate rising. The deputies to the stillborn Chamber were arriving from the country by every coach, but without any thought of revolution in their minds. Such of them as were already in the capital held a meeting at the house of Casimir Perier, but reached no decision as to the course they should adopt, and Villemain said of them, "*Je*

ne m'attendais pas à voir tant de poltrons réunis."¹ The real organizers of revolution were a handful of journalists led by Thiers,² who persuaded some shopkeepers to close their premises, and the workmen, thus rendered idle, were an easy prey for agitators. The rest of the story is soon told. During the course of the *Trois Glorieuses* the troops, badly handled and short of ammunition, were overcome; Charles X and the Dauphin, after vainly abdicating in favour of the Duc de Bordeaux, were compelled to leave the country; and the July Monarchy came into being with Louis Philippe, previously Duc d'Orléans, as King of the French.

The Revolution of 1830, and the course of events that led up to it, has been discussed at length because it is incomparably the most important date in French domestic history since the fall of the First Empire. Before, however, considering its ultimate consequences, it is not without interest to reflect upon the measures which the Royal government should have taken in the situation in which it found itself.

The besetting sin of Charles X, from a political standpoint, was not his autocracy but his honesty. Not only did he trust in the competence of his ministers, but he announced his policy in advance, and stuck to his word; indeed, a worse politician than the last King of France could hardly be imagined. It is so easy to see what he should have done. The press was undoubtedly his worst enemy, but had he adopted the methods now universally employed by the most approved democratic governments he would have had nothing to fear on that score. A few nominations to the Chamber of Peers for the newspaper proprietors, a few lucrative appointments for the more notable

¹ Marquis de Roux: *La Restauration*, p. 324.

² Cf. J. M. S. Allison: *Thiers and the French Monarchy*, pp. 103-109.

journalists, such as Thiers, and a good deal of government advertising, for which the taxpayer would eventually foot the bill, and Charles would have found the *Ordonnances* hailed as a wise act of constructive statesmanship. Had he wished to render himself more secure, he could have made the foundation of any new paper extremely difficult, which would automatically have rallied to his side all those that were already in existence. As it was, he trusted to the common sense of the people, and to their appreciation of the fact that he had no intention of acting in an unconstitutional manner, and, thanks to the unchecked misrepresentation of his opponents, his trust was misplaced.

The real culprit was Polignac, though he was assuredly no Sunderland, and it was his head, not his heart, that was at fault. Had he taken the proper precautions even at the time that the King signed the *Ordonnances* he would have seen that troops, upon whom he could rely and well supplied with ammunition, were stationed at every strategic point; he would have taken care that no newspaper hostile to the ministry made its appearance; he would have arrested the Opposition leaders in their beds; and he would have had men ready to take the place of those who would not work. In short, he would have done all those things that Louis Napoleon did on the night of December 1st, 1851, and the same success would have attended his efforts. The initial advantage was with the ministry, for it took its enemies by surprise, but it soon lost this by not exploiting it properly. Nor was this all, for Polignac and his colleagues had no definite policy to pursue beyond one of repression, even if they had proved victorious. What they should have done, after they had seen the *Ordonnances* safely put into operation, was, it cannot be too often repeated, to have adopted the programme of the *Chambre Introuvable*. What they did was to fall between two stools,

and to drag the old traditional monarchy of France down with them.

Enough has been said to show that in origin the *Trois Glorieuses*, like the English Revolution of 1688 with which they were so freely compared, did not represent a popular movement. A handful of ambitious intellectuals, annoyed because they were not taken at their own valuation, and a few veteran Bonapartist intriguers, with the powerful aid of the Lodges, sufficed to send Charles X into exile. Had Polignac taken any precautions, however slight, the revolution would have been avoided, for in the beginning it was the very reverse of formidable. This fact cannot be too strongly emphasized, for there is a disposition among democratic writers always to take it for granted that the overthrow of a throne must be the result of a popular movement, though a restoration is the work of a small minority. The overwhelming mass of the French people had as little desire to get rid of the main line of the Bourbons as they had to be governed by the Orléans branch in its place, and if ever there was a revolution that was produced by an insignificant minority it was that of 1830. As for desiring a republic, so far were the French people from wanting anything of the sort that it was not until fifty years later, when the Comte de Chambord had definitely refused the throne, that a republican majority was returned to the Chamber.

What France gained by the events of 1830 it is impossible to see. The country was not only prosperous, but it was settling down very contentedly, during the Restoration: the old sores were gradually being healed, and the gulf between past and present was being successfully bridged. Had the normal succession not been interrupted, Louis XIX would have succeeded Charles X in 1836, to be followed in his turn, in 1844, by Henry V. In view of the preoccupation of Polignac with Belgian affairs, it would

be idle to pretend that peace would have remained unbroken, but there would not have been the wars of the Second Empire. It is a fact too often ignored that whereas the first Napoleon was responsible for two foreign invasions of French territory, and the third Napoleon and the present Republic for one each, the monarchy, in recent times, has no such item on the debit side of its account with the people of France, and since the Fronde no foreign army has come within sight of Paris so long as the Bourbons were on the throne. The July Revolution led directly to the Second Empire, and that, in its turn, to Sedan, which, in the fulness of time, was followed by the war of 1914-18. All this was to no small extent the price that had to be paid for the *Trois Glorieuses*, and there were no compensating advantages worth the name.

For the cause of monarchy in France, and therefore in Europe as a whole, the events of 1830 were disastrous. They divided the Royalists to such an extent that it was only on the rarest of occasions that the latter were ever able to unite, and to this very day the action of the Duc d'Orléans in usurping the throne is often the subject of bitter controversy. Above all, the record of the new dynasty was an extremely bad one, for from the time of Monsieur, the brother of Louis XIV, there was hardly a member of it who could be trusted, and the behaviour of Philippe *Egalité* during the French Revolution is unparalleled before or since. Louis XVIII had kept the Duc d'Orléans at a distance, but his successor had overwhelmed him with favours, only to be rewarded with the basest of ingratitude, just as Queen Victoria was similarly, and most outrageously, treated by his great-grandson. The pity is that the claim to the French throne should eventually have passed to this branch of the Bourbon family, for by the time that this took place the quarrel between Legitimists and Orleanists had become so bitter that many of

the former preferred the Third Republic to the Comte de Paris, the lineal descendant of a regicide.

When Charles X realized that Paris was in the hands of the revolutionaries, and that further resistance was useless, he and the Dauphin had, as has been shown, abdicated in favour of the ten-year-old Duc de Bordeaux, later known as the Comte de Chambord, for whom the Duc d'Orléans was to be Lieutenant-General of France. It would have been the minority of Louis XV over again, and might well have solved all difficulties, but if Louis Philippe's morals in sexual matters were better than those of his ancestor, the Regent, where politics were concerned they were worse, and he could not resist the opportunity of personal aggrandisement. Had he obeyed the dictates of conscience rather than of ambition the arrangement made by Charles X must have been put into practice, for neither a Second Empire nor a Second Republic was possible in 1830. In effect, the House of Orléans, which had been a liability to the French monarchy for nearly two centuries, administered the *coup de grâce* by the action of its chief during the July Revolution.

The throne of Louis Philippe was founded upon a false analogy, for the July Monarchy was based upon the assumption that there was a close parallel between the course of events in France in 1830 and in England in 1688. Actually there was no resemblance at all, for William III and the House of Hanover owed the crown to the Whig families which had come into existence at the Reformation—that is to say, to a class that did not exist in France. Louis Philippe was placed upon the throne by the *bourgeoisie*, and for a time he was also supported by certain elements of the Left which realized that the moment for the establishment of a republic had not yet arrived. The Bonapartists, too, were divided, for there were many of them who were wavering in their loyalty to their half-

Austrian Pretender, Napoleon II, while the majority were not yet ready to accept as their leader the young adventurer who afterwards became Napoleon III. The truth was thus that Louis Philippe was accepted as a stop-gap by the various revolutionary factions, and the Left coalition that had placed the crown on his head began to break up as soon as there was a possibility of restoring either the Empire or the Republic. Only the King and the *bourgeoisie* believed that there was any prospect of establishing the new regime permanently.

The July Monarchy was a veritable travesty of real monarchy. It was described by one hostile critic¹ as exhibiting "all the old frippery of the Empire, minus the glory, and of the Restoration, minus the dignity," while Disraeli well defined it when he wrote,² "Alas! that a Bourbon dynasty, even of Orléans, should absolutely depend for its existence on a Guizot or a Thiers, a *professeur* and a *rédacteur*." As for the Court, its standards can best be gauged from some further observations of the same statesman:³ "In the King's time there never was a dinner given at the Tuileries—no matter how stately; I have seen it in the Gallery of Diana with a hundred guests—without a huge smoking ham being placed, at a certain time, before the King. Upon this he operated like a conjurer. The rapidity and precision with which he carved it was a marvellous feat: the slices were vast, but wafer-thin. It was his great delight to carve this ham, and indeed it was a wonderful performance. He told me one day that he had learnt the trick from a waiter at Bucklersbury, where he used to dine once at an eating-house for 9d. per head." Times had indeed changed since the days when the throne of France had been occupied by Louis XVIII, who, by his

¹ Vicomte de Launay: *Chroniques Parisiennes*, vol. ii, pp. 99-100.

² W. F. Monypenny: *Life of Benjamin Disraeli*, vol. ii, p. 95.

³ W. F. Monypenny: *Life of Benjamin Disraeli*, vol. ii, p. 155.

own personal dignity, had acquired an ascendancy over Alexander I of Russia on the morrow of the fall of Napoleon.

This lack of dignity had much to do with the continued weakness, and final collapse, of the regime. Monarchy, of all forms of government, cannot afford to be ridiculous, and Louis Philippe was little else. Also, he depended upon the *bourgeoisie*, and although nations may for a time, and for reasons of necessity, tolerate middle-class government, they never come to have any respect for it. Mr. Christopher Dawson, perhaps the most profound political thinker of the present day, well defined the reasons for this attitude when he wrote:¹ "... the fact remains that the typical leaders of *bourgeois* society do not arouse the same respect as that which is felt for the corresponding figures in the old regime. We instinctively feel that there is something honourable about a King, a noble, or a knight which the banker, the stockbroker, or the democratic politician does not possess. A King may be a bad King, but our very condemnation of him is a tribute to the prestige of his office. . . . The *bourgeoisie* upset the throne and the altar, but they put in their place nothing but themselves. Hence their regime cannot appeal to any higher sanction than that of self-interest. It is continually in a state of disintegration and flux. It is not a permanent form of social organization, but a transitional phase between two orders." As the July Monarchy represented above all else the triumph of the *bourgeoisie*, these observations have a special significance when applied to it.

Louis Philippe was a usurper, and he had the outlook of one. He despised his subjects,² and his interests were not, like those of a legitimate monarch, those of the nation,

¹ *The English Review*, vol. lv, pp. 247-248.

² Cf. W. F. Monypenny: *Life of Benjamin Disraeli*, vol. ii, p. 155.

but of a class. A section of the population had invested their money in him, and naturally expected a substantial dividend upon their capital. The forces that normally support a monarch were either hostile or indifferent, while the masses, who saw in the Citizen King only the tool of the middle class, were quite ready to send him on his travels again. When the end came in February, 1848, the regime fell in the same undignified manner that it had been established, and far from withdrawing slowly to the coast as his predecessor, Charles X, had done, Louis Philippe fled precipitately. The fate of the July Monarchy is an awful warning to all monarchical regimes of the danger of attempting to found a dynasty upon revolutionary principles, and to any government of relying upon one class without making sure that it can control the situation in the hour of need. In this connection it is worthy of note that of all the regimes which France has tried during the past century and a half, including even the Commune of 1871, the July Monarchy is the only one whose restoration has no supporters among Frenchmen to-day.

Louis Philippe had hardly left France before the extent of the damage that he had done to the monarchical cause by his acceptance of the throne in 1830 became obvious. The July Monarchy was followed by the establishment of the Second Republic, but the country was certainly not republican, for the elections resulted in the return of a large monarchist majority, and it seemed that there was nothing left to do but to set up the throne again. Unfortunately, the majority was divided between the supporters of the Comte de Chambord and those of the Comte de Paris, the grandson of Louis Philippe, in whose favour the latter had abdicated, and in spite of all the negotiations that took place¹ no agreement could be reached between

¹ For a full account of these, cf. Marquis de Noailles: *Le Bureau du Roi*, pp. 11-113.

the rival claimants. Meanwhile, Louis Napoleon had been elected President, and he began to insinuate that the Empire would satisfy the monarchical desires of France best, since neither Bourbon would give way to the other. Bonapartism gained ground rapidly, and as, at the end of three years of incessant wrangling, the monarchists appeared to be no nearer a composition of their differences, the Prince-President had a relatively easy task in persuading the French to choose him as their Emperor.

If the July Monarchy had divided the French monarchists into two camps, the Second Empire further complicated matters by creating a third. The Court of Napoleon III was infinitely more Royal than that of his uncle had been, and the fact that the Empress was at heart a Legitimist reconciled many to the regime who would otherwise have opposed it. Then, again, the birth of the Prince Imperial seemed to assure its continuity, whereas the Comte de Chambord was childless, and, as subsequent events were to show, the Orléans family aroused but little enthusiasm. Above all, there was a glamour about the Court of Napoleon III that had not been known since the days of Louis XVI, and it was a welcome relief after the *bourgeois* simplicity of the ham-cutting Citizen King. It represented, as we now know, the sunset of the old France, but if it was not the real thing, it was at any rate a colourable imitation of it. Even at this distance of time it is difficult not to be attracted to the Second Empire, though it must be confessed that the drabness of French history since its fall probably lends some enchantment to the view. What Swinburne said of Christianity may be far more aptly applied to democracy—namely, that the world has grown grey at its breath—and the dictators, with the exception of Signor Mussolini, have not brought back the pomp and splendour associated with power which dazzled and delighted mankind in the days of the monarchy. The reign

of Napoleon III was only a splendid twilight, but it appears like noon compared with the night of the Third Republic.

In these circumstances, although, of course, the future was dark, it is not surprising that a good many monarchists should have rallied to the Empire. As the years passed, it remained apparently unshaken, while not even in adversity could Legitimists and Orléanists agree. The only alternative seemed to be republicanism and anarchy, and so those who had regarded it dubiously at the beginning began to accept it. In this way there came into existence a third definitely monarchist party, and when the Empire fell it remained to add a further complication. At this point it may perhaps be noted as a curious commentary upon the lack of respect which democrats show for those in whose names they profess to act that when the Third Republic was established, by violence, it may be added, on September 4th, 1870, Gambetta and Favre were quite unaffected by the fact that only four months before the Empire had been approved at a plebiscite by 7,359,000 votes to 1,572,000. The same contempt for the expressed wishes of the people has been shown by the rulers of republican Spain in our own time.

The fall of the Empire, and the siege of Paris which followed that event, gave the Bourbons what was to prove their last chance of regaining the throne. The Bonapartists were implicated up to the hilt in the disasters that had overtaken France during the Franco-Prussian War, while the republicans were held responsible for the futile, though costly, resistance that had been made to the enemy after Sedan. Furthermore, the Comte de Chambord was still without a son, and the Comte de Paris, now a man, was proving far more conciliatory in the matter of the dynastic question than those who had spoken on his behalf in the days of the Second Republic. It is true that the German Government preferred France to be republican and weak,

rather than monarchist and strong,¹ but its support was hardly an asset to any French party on the morrow of the Treaty of Frankfurt. The key to the whole position was the Comte de Chambord, and an examination of his character and policy is essential to an understanding of the history of the monarchist cause in France from the overthrow of the Second Empire down to the present day.

The Comte de Chambord was born in 1820, the posthumous child of the murdered Duc de Berry, and as chief of the House of Bourbon for the last thirty-nine years of his life he may be said to have been during this period the embodiment of the monarchical principle in Europe. In many ways he resembled James III and VIII, though if there was less of melancholy about his character in age there was also, it must be confessed, less of enthusiasm in youth. Had the Comte de Chambord been prepared to do in 1848-51, or again in 1870-73, what James did in the Fifteen, he would have been King of France. The claimant to a throne must, above all else, be ambitious, and Henry V, as the monarchists termed him, lacked the ambition to be King.² He would return if France called him, but he would not take the initiative by striking a blow for his own rights. Had he appeared in France during the Second Republic he would almost certainly have confounded the Orléanists, but he insisted that France should come, so to speak, to him, and the Bonaparte seized the opportunity that the Bourbon had missed.

The Second Empire fell on September 4th, 1870, and on the 12th one of the leading French Legitimists left Paris

¹ Cf. C. Grant Robertson: *Bismarck*, pp. 334-335; also J. Bainville: *Bismarck*, p. 62: "*La constitution de 1875 peut être considérée comme l'acte additionnel du traité de Francfort.*"

² "*A ce Prince doué d'éminentes qualités, il a manqué l'ambition et la hardiesse, conditions essentielles à un prétendant.*" Comte René de Monti de Rezé: *Souvenirs sur le Comte de Chambord*, p. 115.

for Geneva, where the Comte de Chambord was then staying, and urged the latter to land in Brittany, and place himself at the head of the national resistance to the Germans.¹ The Comte de Chambord dismissed the scheme as impracticable, though in retrospect it appears to have offered the best chance since the *Trois Glorieuses* of re-establishing monarchy permanently in France. The appearance of Henry V, like another Henry IV, in the nation's hour of peril, ready to assist in driving the invader from her soil, would have made an irresistible appeal to all Frenchmen, irrespective of party, and although it was too late to recover Alsace-Lorraine, or to save Paris, the force of the Royal example would have remained. Such action on the part of the Comte de Chambord would automatically have healed the breach with the House of Orléans, for the Comte de Paris would have been forced by public opinion to follow where Henry V led, and so the error of 1830 would have been repaired.

The real cause of the Comte de Chambord's hesitation was his attitude towards the flag question, and it is to his policy in this matter that the Third Republic owes its existence at the present time. He made the *drapeau blanc* of his family the symbol of everything for which he stood, and he regarded the *tricolor* as the outward and visible sign of everything to which he was opposed. In vain it was pointed out to him that in the reign of Louis XV of the thousand standards carried by the French regiments only 141 were white; that when Louis XVIII formed his military household in 1814 only one regiment wore the white cockade; and that a compromise could be effected by placing the *fleurs de lys* on a scutcheon in the middle of the *tricolor*. It was even suggested that as the matter was one of conscience he should refer the point to the Pope, but the Comte de Chambord was adamant. If France

¹ Marquis de Noailles: *Le Bureau du Roi*, pp. 156-158.

wanted him she must first of all repent of her revolutionary backslidings, and the proof of that could only be the acceptance of the *drapeau blanc*. During the days of the Second Republic he had not adopted so unyielding an attitude, and had actually gone so far as to tell the Duc de Nemours that it was a question that could not be settled while he was in exile. Since then the *tricolor* had waved over the forces of law and order in the suppression of the Commune; it had been carried by those who overthrew the Roman Republic; and it had protected beneath its folds the persecuted Christians of the Lebanon. In short, the revolutionary standard of 1871 was not the *tricolor*, but the red flag.

The extraordinary thing about this flag controversy, which has had such fatal results, is that the Comte de Chambord was historically wrong as well as politically mistaken.¹ Apart from the fact that the livery of the French Kings was traditionally of the three colours, the flag had been changed on several occasions. Philip II had a standard of blue sown with golden lilies, but this was modified by Louis VIII and Louis IX; it was altered again by Charles VII and Francis I, and under the later Valois the national flag was blue and white. The *drapeau blanc* made its appearance with the Bourbons, though, as has been shown, it was not used by any means exclusively. Curiously enough, when the Netherlands became independent, they asked Henry IV to design them a flag, and as a proof of his friendship he gave them his own colours—namely, white, blue, and red: white for authority, blue for France, and red for Navarre. The British flag has, of course, often been changed, and so, it may be added, has the Papal standard, which in its present form only dates from 1815.

The elections for the National Assembly were held in

¹ Cf. Comte René de Monti de Rezé: *Souvenirs sur le Comte de Chambord*, pp. 115-118.

February, 1871, and when that body met at Bordeaux it was found that once again France had returned a Royalist majority. During the two following years there were incessant negotiations between the Comte de Chambord, the Comte de Paris, and the leaders of the majority, and it was generally taken for granted throughout Europe that after so many vicissitudes France was about to settle down under her ancient dynasty, in the person of Henry V. That such was the desire of the French people there can be no shadow of doubt, and their subsequent acceptance of the Third Republic, which has never been really popular, shows how contented they would have been under the restored monarchy, which aroused real enthusiasm. How near the Comte de Chambord came to being restored at this time may be gauged from the fact that the carriages in which the King was to make his entry into Paris had been built, the horses that were to draw them had been bought, and the uniforms of the Court had been made,¹ while a monarchical Constitution was in proof, and the majority was waiting to pass it the moment that the word arrived that the Comte de Chambord had accepted the throne.²

It is unnecessary to discuss in detail the protracted negotiations of these years.³ The Comte de Chambord actually paid two visits to France, and he saw both the Comte de Paris and the leaders of the majority in the National Assembly, but he could not be prevailed upon to modify his attitude with regard to the *drapeau blanc*. On at least two occasions, in 1871 and again in 1873, an agreement was reached upon every other issue, when the flag question

¹ Cf. Comte René de Monti de Rezé: *Souvenirs sur le Comte de Chambord*, pp. 80-83.

² Cf. Marquis de Noailles: *Le Bureau du Roi*, pp. 256-257; and J. Bainville: *Histoire de France*, p. 519.

³ They are narrated at length by the Marquis de Noailles, *op. cit.*

once more ruined all that had been accomplished. In 1871 the Comte de Chambord issued a manifesto, from Chambord itself, which concluded with the ill-omened words, "*Henri V ne peut abandonner le drapeau blanc d'Henri IV*," and in 1873 he said he would rather not reign at all than be "*le roi légitime de la révolution*." In the proclamation of 1871 he also, it is curious to note, refers to the *drapeau blanc* as the flag of Francis I, which it most certainly was not. This insistence upon principle on the one part begot an equal insistence on the other, and the deadlock was complete. Even the Pope himself could not overcome the scruples of him who was by right the Eldest Son of the Church, for when he sent Cardinal Lavigerie to persuade the Comte de Chambord to accept the crown, that prelate could effect nothing; and on his return to Rome the Pope, Pius IX, prophetically exclaimed, "*Ah! che scempiaccio! Perde se stesso e perde noi!*"¹ In 1875 the majority that had so vainly sought to restore the monarchy found itself under the necessity of formally constituting the Third Republic, and two years later the Left obtained control of the destinies of France.

Devotion to principle is so rare as always to command respect, but it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Comte de Chambord was unnecessarily obdurate so far as his flag was concerned. First of all, he was historically unjustified in his attitude, as has been shown; and, secondly, he had no sons, and his heir, the Comte de Paris, had no scruples whatever about accepting the *tricolor*. Those, however, who may be inclined to sneer at the insistence of the Comte de Chambord would do well to remember that democratic communities can be just as exacting where flags are concerned, as the controversies in Germany and South Africa have shown in our own time. In defence of the Comte de Chambord it may be remarked that if he

¹ Cf. Charles Benoist: *Souvenirs*, vol. i, p. 177.

rigidly adhered to principle himself, he was quite ready to respect the views of others, as an incident recorded by Comte René de Monti de Rezé abundantly proves.¹ One of his suite was describing how, in passing through Paris, he had recently seen Napoleon III, the Empress, and the Prince Imperial driving up the Champs Élysées. The Comte de Chambord asked, "*Et vous avez salué, j'espère?*" Upon receiving a reply in the negative, he continued, "*Vous avez eu tort. L'Empereur représente un principe, moi un autre. Qui sait si, avec l'évolution des temps, le principe que représente Napoleon III ne s'adapte pas mieux que le mien à ma chère patrie? Puis le Second Empire n'est pas pour moi une spoliation.*"

In all else save the flag question, the Comte de Chambord was very definitely in advance of his time.² He was quite prepared to accept universal suffrage (though he wished to guard against the worst excesses of an irresponsible electorate), to leave the control of finance and the negotiation of purely commercial treaties to the Chamber, and to grant full liberty of teaching; at the same time he proposed a large measure of decentralization, which was to be effected, firstly, by extending the powers of the *conseils généraux*, and, secondly, by creating in each of the old provinces a fresh body consisting of representatives from the *conseils généraux* of the departments that composed it. In industrial matters his views were of a syndicalist nature, and inclined to what is to-day known as the Corporate State. In effect, in all that concerned the administration of the country he had learnt the lesson of the mistakes made at the Restoration, and he wished to revert to the programme of decentralization that had found favour with the *Chambre Introuvable*.

The failure to restore the historic French monarchy in

¹ *Souvenirs sur le Comte de Chambord*, pp. 40-41.

² Cf. Marquis de Noailles: *Le Bureau du Roi*, pp. 178-179.

1848, and again after the fall of the Second Empire, has had the most disastrous influence upon the subsequent history of the world. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that it was a tragedy comparable only with the late war. France is the political centre of Europe, and the spectacle of a legitimate monarch reigning once more at Versailles would have had a steadying effect upon the whole continent. Henry V and his successors would not have allowed, as the Third Republic has allowed, Paris to become the refuge of all and every sort of revolutionary, whose plots are continually embittering the relations of France with her neighbours. Moreover, if the war of 1914 had taken place, which is unlikely, the French monarchy would not have prolonged it unnecessarily, as M. Ribot did, for party reasons, when he refused to entertain the peace proposals of the Austrian Emperor.¹ The presence of the Bourbons upon the throne of France would have prevented much of the turmoil of the last three decades, and in more than one country the pendulum would not have swung so violently between the extremes of anarchy and despotism as has actually been the case.

As for France herself, it is impossible to say, with any regard for the truth, that she has not been a very decided

¹ Cf. the author's article in *The Fortnightly Review*, November, 1930. Anatole France said of this incident: "No one will ever persuade me that the war could not have been ended long ago. The Emperor Charles offered peace. There is the only honest man who occupied an important position during the war, but he was not listened to. In my opinion his offer ought to have been accepted. The Emperor Charles has a sincere desire for peace, so everybody hates him. Ribot is an old scoundrel to have neglected such an occasion. A King of France, yes, a King would have taken pity on our poor people, bled white, extenuated, at the end of their strength. But democracy is without heart, without bowels. A slave of the powers of money, it is pitiless and inhuman." Quoted by Herbert Vivian: *The Life of the Emperor Charles of Austria*, p. 132.

loser by becoming republican. The Conservative Republic, which so many Frenchmen fondly imagined was to be their permanent form of government in place of the monarchy, was not long in moving to the Left, and the result has been the destruction of everything that made France the leading Power in Europe. The renewal of diplomatic relations with the Vatican after the war cannot disguise the anti-clerical policy of those who control the French Republic, and it was the France of the Most Christian King, not that of the Grand Orient, that was the wonder of the world. French politics have become a by-word during the last sixty years, and scandal has succeeded scandal with monotonous regularity. The politicians let France drift into the war of 1914 wholly unprepared, and with a faulty strategical plan, and it was only the heroism of her people, with the help of Great Britain, that averted a disaster far worse than that of 1870. The Third Republic proved itself unable to make war, and it proved equally incapable of concluding a satisfactory peace, for no government that was ordinarily competent would have signed the Treaty of Versailles, and then proceeded to agree, almost every year, to some fresh modification of its terms. Even effective disarmament is impossible owing to the rule of democracy in Paris, and the present insecurity of France is the price that the latter has to pay for her republicanism.

The fact is that in the absence of the monarchy the national interest has been forgotten, and France is to-day an oligarchy, governed by the Masonic Lodges in their own interest. One day during the financial crisis of 1925-26 crowds of ex-soldiers and patriots were demonstrating outside the Chamber, and M. Briand, at the tribune, denounced them as a menace to the regime; then, as he did not consider that this threat had sufficiently moved his hearers, he added in a trembling voice, "*Ce régime, mes-*

sieurs, c'est-à-dire chacun de nous."¹ No truer words have ever been spoken at the Palais Bourbon, and they form the most crushing indictment of the Third Republic. The influence of the Lodges is paramount in the groups of the Left, and since 1877 France has never had an administration that was not to some extent dependent upon the Left. So strong are the Masonic forces that it is by no means easy for a man who is a Conservative, let alone a Royalist, even to be elected to the Chamber, and his chance of ever attaining office is hopeless. The Lodges have been allowed to batten upon France in a way that would have been inconceivable under a monarchy.

The blame for this state of affairs must be equally divided between the Comte de Chambord and the monarchist majority of 1871. When the former found that he could not accept the throne upon the only terms on which there was any chance of obtaining it, he should have abdicated in favour of the next heir, the Comte de Paris, whereas his attitude was such that it prevented not only himself, but anyone else, from securing the crown. Similarly, the majority should have made it quite clear to the Comte de Chambord that if he refused the throne it would at once be offered to the Comte de Paris, and when it transpired that Henry V would only come in with the *drapeau blanc*, then Philip VII should have been proclaimed with the *tricolor*. The weakness of the monarchist cause was its lack of leadership. There was neither a Monk among the soldiers, nor a Cánovas del Castillo among the politicians, while neither the Comte de Chambord nor the Comte de Paris was a Bonnie Prince Charlie. As on so many occasions in human history, the lack of a first-class man at the right moment has had the most profound and calamitous consequences.

The monarchist cause in France has suffered since the

¹ Cf. Philippe Barrès: *La Victoire au Dernier Tournant*.

seventies from exactly the same weaknesses as prevented the restoration of the Bourbons at that time—namely, divided counsels and indifferent leadership. The Comte de Chambord died in 1883, but he omitted to state definitely whom he regarded as his heir, with the result that there was an unseemly wrangle round his bier, and the Comte de Paris was not present at his funeral. In spite of the renunciation of the French throne by Philip V of Spain, his descendants in the male line, the Carlist branch of the Spanish Bourbons, have always considered that their claim was better than that of the House of Orléans, and although they have not found many supporters in France itself, a few Royalists have rallied to them, and so prevented the formation of a united anti-republican front. The Comte de Paris (Philip VII) died in 1894, and transmitted his rights to his son, the Duc d'Orléans (Philip VIII), who, in his turn, was succeeded in 1926 by his cousin, the Duc de Guise (John III). With regard to all these princes, it must unfortunately be stated that the old and deep-rooted French suspicion of the House of Orléans has seriously militated against their chances of success.¹

For some years, too, the existence of a strong Bonapartist party was a further source of weakness. The clerical policy of Napoleon III, combined with the well-known ultramontane sympathies of the Empress, had rallied a good many Conservatives to the Empire, and even after the disasters of 1870 there was a considerable body of opinion in France which held that if the monarchical form of government was ultimately to prevail it would be in the person of a Bonaparte, who would not alienate the Left to the same extent as a Bourbon. How much truth there may have been in this belief was never proved, for

¹ Cf. André Maurois: *Marshal Lyautey* (English edition), pp. 31-32.

the Prince Imperial (Napoleon IV) met his death in 1879 in even more tragic, if more heroic, circumstances than those attendant upon that of Napoleon II, and his claims passed to his collateral, the notorious "Plon-Plon." Since the death of the Prince Imperial there has never been any real chance of the establishment of a Third Empire, though at the close of the late war there was an intrigue afoot in French military circles to restore it in the person of "Plon-Plon's" younger son, who had been a general in the Russian service, but his elder brother, the late Prince Victor Napoleon, insisted upon the principle of primogeniture, and as the other refused to disobey the head of his family, the scheme came to nothing.¹ More recently it has been rumoured that a certain newspaper proprietor was taking an interest in the heir of the Bonapartes, though it is not easy to imagine Napoleon VII carried to the throne on the crest of a wave of public opinion manufactured in the press, however delicately perfumed the waters beneath.

The lack of competent leadership has been an even more fruitful cause of failure. While the star of Boulanger was in the ascendant the misguided Royalists attempted to hitch their wagon to it, although there never was the least doubt but that *le brav' général* was playing solely for his own hand, and never had any intention of restoring the Bourbons. The result was that monarchism became involved in the discredit that soon attached to Boulangism, and people were heard to declare that the support given to an adventurer like Boulanger was just what one would expect from the House of Orléans. Since that date the Third Republic has been shaken to its foundations by innumerable crises (the Panama and Dreyfus *affaires* were the worst, but there have been many others nearly as bad), but no advantage was taken of them, and now the regime

¹ Information received from a private source.

has been allowed to win the war.¹ The explanation of this probably lies in the fact that for many years the Right has been led by eminent men of letters, and it is a melancholy fact that great writers are almost invariably found wanting when the moment for action arrives. Paul Déroulède, Maurice Barrès, Léon Daudet, and Charles Maurras are the glories of French literature, but they were not intended to lead political parties.

Active Royalism of the type needed to overthrow the Third Republic certainly requires the services of as many able pens as it can muster in its support, but it also needs leaders who know when the time has come to strike. Governments, except in Spain, are no longer overthrown by authors and journalists, and in spite of the hostility which the republican regime arouses in many quarters no serious attempt has been made to show that only the return of the King can effect a cure. Had the Royalist party been properly led of late years the discontented in Alsace-Lorraine would have voted monarchist to a man, and so would every other district of France that is opposed to the existing centralization. In this post-war age of Socialized democracy the parties of the Right, if they are true to their principles, must of necessity be the real revolutionaries, because the present order is none of their building, and their first object is to destroy it. The French monarchists have not always understood this, and so, although Royalism has produced its martyrs, like poor young Philippe Daudet, it has yet to win its first battle, let alone a whole campaign.

No account of the French Royalist movement would be complete which did not contain some reference to its relations with the Church. Throne and altar were regarded as inseparable while the Comte de Chambord still lived, and the interest which Pius IX took in the restoration of the

¹ It looks, however, like losing the peace.

monarchy is sufficiently attested by the mission upon which he sent Cardinal Lavigerie, which has already been mentioned. Leo XIII made no immediate change in his predecessor's policy, but after the death of the Comte de Chambord he came to the conclusion that the chances of the Comte de Paris were negligible, while the failure of Boulanger proved that the Third Republic was not so unstable as had appeared. In these circumstances the Pope initiated the policy of the *ralliement*—that is to say, he endeavoured to unloose the ties that bound the Church in France to the Royalist party, and he gave his approval to the doctrine that a Frenchman might be at once a republican and a good Catholic. It need hardly be said that this attitude roused a storm of protest among monarchists, and its effect was, unfortunately, to strengthen the Left by sowing dissension among the parties of the Right.

Until recently the Pope's motives have been obscure, but M. Charles Benoist, in his *Souvenirs*,¹ has thrown a great deal of fresh light on the subject. It is now clear that Leo was alarmed at the anti-clerical tendencies of successive French administrations, and as he saw no prospect of a monarchist restoration he hoped to come to terms with the existing regime by showing that Catholicism and Royalism were not necessarily synonyms: indeed, the republican authorities seem to have given an assurance that if he took such a step there should be no further legislation directed against the Church. The upshot of the whole matter was that the Pope kept his side of the bargain, while the Republic broke its word, and when the attack on the Church was made in earnest by the ministry of M. Combes, the Right was too divided to make any effective resistance. M. Benoist makes it quite clear that had not Leo XIII taken the line that he did, the Franco-Russian alliance, which enabled France to emerge from the isola-

¹ Vol. i, pp. 167-203.

tion in which she had existed since 1870, would not have been concluded: gratitude, however, is not a democratic virtue, and the Lodges would not tolerate the keeping of promises made to Popes. In this connection it is not without interest to note that the law for the separation of Church and State was voted by deputies who represented 2,647,315 voters out of a total electorate of 10,967,000.¹ So, in the absence of a monarch, is a nation exploited by the factions.

In the present century the only active monarchist body in France has been the *Action Française*. It was founded in 1898 by the late Henri Vaugeois, and it was originally only nationalist in its views, though it soon became Royalist under the influence of M. Charles Maurras. From the first it was regarded with suspicion by the Church, for M. Maurras is one of the leading Positivists of the day, and the doctrines of Comte have long been anathema to the Vatican. Pius X, although no friend to the Third Republic, actually condemned the movement at the beginning of 1914, though the condemnation was not made public,² and it was left for Pius XI to put it into force. This aroused a most violent controversy, into which it is fortunately unnecessary to enter here,³ and it undoubtedly weakened for a time the monarchist cause to the advantage of the present regime.

There can be little doubt that Pius XI was, on the political side, actuated by much the same motives as Leo XIII; that is to say, he believed a restoration to be impracticable, and, alarmed at the anti-clerical tendencies displayed by

¹ V. Duguit: *Traité de Droit Constitutionnel*, vol. ii, p. 576.

² Cf. Denis Gwynn: *Pius XI*, pp. 163-165.

³ Those interested are referred to *L'Action Française et le Vatican*, the official statement of the Royalist organization, with a preface by MM. Charles Maurras and Léon Daudet, and, for the Papal point of view, to Denis Gwynn: *The Action Française Condemnation*.

the Chamber of 1924, he wished to give convincing proof that the Church was not hostile to the Third Republic. Moreover, the Pope believed, rightly or wrongly, that there existed a similarity of outlook between M. Briand and himself in international matters, and he was desirous of doing everything in his power to keep on good terms with that statesman, whose policy has always been strongly opposed by the Royalists. Time alone can show whether, from the point of view of the Church, he was right, or whether it is to be the history of the *ralliement* over again, with the Pope making substantial concessions, and receiving nothing whatever in return. In the meantime, a recent authority has questioned the permanence of the existing arrangement, and he says: "It is not easy to convince public opinion that the Vatican places the whole of its hope, unreservedly and without thought of an alternative, in the chance of obtaining a satisfactory amendment of the religious laws by action within the Republic."¹

The home policy of the *Action Française* is by no means confined merely to opposition to the Republic, and to propaganda in favour of the Duc de Guise. It is a definitely constructive movement, and its aim is the establishment of the Corporate State. It rightly believes that the interests of the nation are best safeguarded by a monarch, and the structure of the State under the new Restoration will be such as effectively to prevent its control by those factions which have dissipated its resources during the Third Republic. The King will have ministers responsible solely to himself, and there will be no central representative Parliament, but every year delegations from the provincial assemblies will meet in Paris to vote supplies, while the chambers of commerce, and suchlike bodies, will act as technical advisers to the government. In the provinces the natural economic areas surrounding such large centres of

¹ W. L. Middleton: *The French Political System*, pp. 29-30.

population as Lille, Lyons, or Bordeaux will become administrative units, autonomous in all matters which do not affect the national interest. It will be seen that this programme, based upon the practice of the old historic monarchy, is the development of that of the Comte de Chambord, and one more fitted to the needs of post-war France it would be difficult to conceive. What is lacking is the leader to carry it into effect.¹

What has prevented the *Action Française* from gaining the number of adherents that it would otherwise have attracted is its intransigent nationalism. This aspect of its policy was at least a contributory cause of the Papal condemnation, and it is in flat contradiction of everything for which monarchy stands. The old Kings of France were very far from being extravagantly nationalist, and, in actual fact, nationalism and democracy were the twin monstrosities that issued from the womb of the French Revolution, begotten of the lust of Rousseau. This excessive nationalism of the French Royalists has tended to blind them to the international aspect of their creed, and instead of co-operating closely with the German monarchists they have gone out of their way to attack the latter on every possible occasion. This is the more to be regretted in that each year that passes makes it clearer that the only salvation for France lies in such widespread reforms as the return of the monarchy would imply. She fears for her security, and she declares that she is the one stable nation in modern Europe, but it is difficult to see how she can ever be secure or stable while she is governed by the Masonic Lodges in accordance with the revolutionary principles of 1789: rather does her safety lie in the recall of the heir of the forty Kings, who, in a thousand years, made France.

¹ For a full statement of the Royalist case, cf. Lucien Dubech: *Pourquoi Je Suis Royaliste*.

Chapter VI

Fascism and Monarchy

TO many superficial observers it has seemed strange that Italy, with its republican traditions, should have remained a monarchy in spite of all the revolutionary disturbances to which it has been subject since the achievement of unity over seventy years ago. The answer, of course, is that the Italian is perhaps the shrewdest race in the world, and although there have been many temptations to stray from the broad highway of monarchy, they have all been firmly resisted. The House of Savoy transformed Italy from a geographical expression into one of the leading Powers of the world, and the fact has not been forgotten. As elsewhere, democratic politicians have exerted every endeavour to weaken the throne and to belittle its occupant in the eyes of his subjects, but the dynasty has withstood their assaults, and at the present time its prestige stands higher than ever with all sections of the population.

In effect, the weakness of the monarchical principle in the past, which led many Italians at the time of the *Risorgimento* to believe that their country could only be united as a republic, was due to the fact that, outside Piedmont, it was represented by the foreigner or by the Pope, both of whom were regarded as the main obstacles to the attainment of unity. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that monarchy came to be regarded as synonymous with the *status quo*, and republicanism with its abolition. During the generation that followed the fall of Napoleon the High Priest of legitimism was Metternich, and he was the minister of the alien ruler whose troops held Milan

and Venice in thrall. The King of Naples and the Duke of Parma were Spaniards,¹ while the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Duke of Modena were Austrians, so that it is hardly surprising that opposition to the rule of the foreigner should have assumed a republican form, quite apart from the fact that the protagonist of Italian nationalism at that time was so convinced an enemy of monarchy as Giuseppe Mazzini.

In retrospect, it is impossible to accept the theory, so often advanced, that Italy is by tradition anti-monarchical. There can, of course, be no doubt that the terrific struggle between Empire and Papacy weakened the principle of monarchy, while the stability that characterized the republics of Venice and Genoa was in marked contrast with the turmoil that was the lot of the other Italian States. This is true, but then the various principalities were not legitimate hereditary monarchies, so much as tyrannies, in the Greek sense of the term, where the succession was precarious in the extreme: the only real exception was Piedmont, and time was to show that in the dynasty there lay the hope of the whole peninsula. Such families as the Visconti were monarchical solely in the etymological meaning of the word, and there is no evidence that they ever gained the affection of those over whom they ruled. The same applies to the Medici, whom the Florentines expelled on more than one occasion, and whom they finally tolerated because there did not appear to be any alternative that was not definitely worse. The Estensi, it must be admitted, do not come into the same category, and more nearly approximate to the House of Savoy; indeed, for one fleeting moment there was a chance that Italy might be united under their sceptre, and so long as the family was

¹ The former, however, could lay some claim to a national outlook in that he shared the defects of the least reputable class of his subjects.

still represented in the male line the House of Este never lost its hold upon popular imagination. Elsewhere there was no incarnation of the principle of true monarchy that could appeal to the loyalty of the patriotic Italian.

As for the Papacy, it was a theocracy rather than a monarchy. The Pope was also recognized as King in his own dominions, but it was as the successor of St. Peter that he was generally regarded by his subjects. It was, in the nature of things, quite impossible to dissociate him from the Church of which he was the head, and it was as Catholics, not as *papalini*, that those who lived in the States of the Church accepted his rule. The whole question of the Temporal Power was bound up, not with the advantages or disadvantages of the monarchical principle, but with the position of the Church in the world, and no one ever took the Pope seriously as a temporal monarch in the ordinary sense, at any rate in his own dominions. Furthermore, until 1523 he was often a foreigner, and even after that date he was frequently a native of some distant part of the peninsula which seemed as remote as the Indies to the majority of the inhabitants of the States of the Church. Such being the case, it is in no way surprising that when the struggle for independence began it should have been republican in its nature in all that wide area which was ruled by the Pope, and in Romagna in particular this sentiment died hard. In effect, therefore, it was not so much that Italy was naturally republican as that she had, outside Piedmont, little or no experience of the working of monarchical institutions in a manner that was not essentially repugnant to the national sentiment and aspirations.

In the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century there were three main schools of thought among those who were working for Italian independence.¹ First of all there

¹ Cf. Mario Missiroli: *L'Italia d'Oggi*, p. 11 *et seq.*

were the federalists, inspired by Vincenzo Gioberti, who desired to see Italy united in a federation of which the Pope should be President. This scheme, of course, would have left the individual States as they were, and for this reason it made no inconsiderable appeal to monarchists throughout the peninsula. Its weakness lay in the fact that it presupposed a Pope who was willing to offend Austria, the leading Catholic Power, for the sake of the freedom of Italy, an impossible decision to expect any man in such a position to take. The election of Pius IX in 1846, as the successor of the pro-Austrian Gregory XVI, temporarily raised the hopes of Gioberti and his followers, for the new Pope was favourable to the cause of Italian unity, and it is even said that he had been a *carbonaro* in his youth. Before long, however, he realized that Gioberti's scheme was impracticable, and when the final decision had to be made Pius ranged himself on the side of Austria and the existing order. From that moment the federal solution ceased to be practical politics, and the stage was clear for the second group—namely, Mazzini and his republicans.

Their plan was to overthrow the Temporal Power of the Pope, expel the existing dynasties and the Austrians, and create a unitary republic. They had their chance in 1848, and after considerable bloodshed they failed miserably. That year of revolutions was in many ways the forerunner of 1918, with the difference that on the former occasion the forces of law and order had not been weakened and divided by a long European war. All over the continent of Europe the contest was engaged, and the republicans were fairly beaten. The result should have been decisive, as, indeed, it would have been, had not the so-called monarchist statesmen in almost every country proceeded to betray the principles which they were supposed to be supporting. In Italy, at any rate, the failure of Mazzini in 1848 proved to be a definite and permanent gain, for it

showed that if Italy was ever to be united it could only be under the sceptre of the House of Savoy. When the Gianicolo passed from the hands of Garibaldi into those of the French, the real victor was neither Louis Napoleon nor Pius IX, but Victor Emmanuel II, who now became the only hope of every Italian patriot.

This third group had not been very strong until then, but the logic of events made all who were not fanatics rally round Piedmont, and those who realized the impossibility of any other solution now began to work for this end. At their head was Cavour, one of the greatest statesmen of all time. The story of the way in which he overcame every obstacle that lay in the path of his policy belongs to the history of Italy, rather than to that of the monarchical ideal, but attention must be called to the fact that he did not, like so many of his successors, encroach upon the Royal prerogatives. Under the later governments of the pre-Fascist era, notably in the days of Giolitti, the King was manœuvred into the position of a puppet, and even the choice of Prime Minister was settled in the lobbies of the Chamber rather than by the Crown. Cavour was undoubtedly a believer in the Constitution, but he acted in such a way that the rights secured by it to the various factors in the State, including the monarch, were respected. What line he would have taken had he lived another twenty years it is impossible to say, but there can be little doubt that it was the departure from his interpretation of the Constitution, and in particular the assumption of all power by the Chamber, that eventually brought the whole governmental machine to a standstill.¹

Many tears have been shed by monarchists over the dethronement of the King of Naples, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Dukes of Modena and Parma, but their disappearance was inevitable. Without believing the accu-

¹ Cf. Luigi Villari: *Italy*, pp. 178-179.

sations which were so freely levelled against their administration by contemporaries,¹ it is impossible to resist the conclusion that the monarchical cause gained rather than lost by their overthrow. By 1859 the choice was not between them and the Savoyard, but between the latter and the red republicanism that had proved its incompetence eleven years before. There was no hope that they could retain their thrones much longer, and it was better that Victor Emmanuel should be in Rome than Mazzini. Had the Medici still been in Florence, the Farnesi in Parma, and the old Estensi in Modena, it would have been different; but as things were, the Italian dynasties represented, not the principle of legitimate monarchy, but the Austrian predominance in Italy.

Not the least remarkable aspect of modern Italian history has been the part played in it by the House of Savoy. The average of ability displayed, during many centuries, by the members of that dynasty has been higher than that of any other family, Royal or otherwise, of which there is record, and there is no reason to suppose that, in this respect, the future will differ from the past. Even more extraordinary is the way in which the dynasty has adapted itself to changed circumstances. Whether as Dukes of Savoy, Kings of Sardinia, or Kings of Italy, the Savoyard sovereigns have shown themselves to be far-sighted patriots, fully alive to the needs of the age in which they lived. In the days of benevolent despotism their rule was benevolent rather than despotic; as constitutional monarchs in the Liberal State they did their best to make the machinery work in spite of the politicians; and now, under the Fascist regime, King Victor Emmanuel III is working in the

¹ Cf. Marquess of Normanby: *Vindication of the Duke of Modena against the Charges of Mr. Gladstone*, *passim*. In any event, a distinction must be drawn between the administration of Naples and that of Tuscany.

closest and most whole-hearted co-operation with Signor Mussolini. Charles Albert resigned his crown for the sake of his country; Victor Emmanuel II consented to the cession to France of the cradle of his race, Savoy, as the price of Italian unification; and Humbert perished at the hands of an assassin.¹ It is a notable record, and if one were asked to indicate the Royal House that could best serve as a model to other dynasties it would be dishonest not to cite that of Savoy.

The first of these four remarkable monarchs was Charles Albert, who ascended the throne of Sardinia in 1831. He was a cadet of the Royal House, being the head of the Carignano branch, which had its origin in a younger son of Charles Emmanuel I, at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The senior line came to an end with Charles Felix, and the succession then passed to Charles Albert. The new monarch had had a somewhat varied career, for, like Pius IX, he is said to have belonged to the *carbonari* as a young man, and he was accused by the Liberals, always eager to blame someone else for their own incompetence, of having played them false in a conspiracy in 1821, in which he had been implicated. More to the point was his determination to expel the foreigner from the peninsula, and to eat a few more leaves of the Italian artichoke. It is true that for some years after his accession Charles Albert vigorously repressed the activities of those who followed Mazzini, but then, as has been shown, these latter were red republicans, with whom it was impossible for a monarch to have any sympathy. This fact more than justifies the apparent vacillation of the King in 1848, for those with whom he was asked to co-operate entertained such extreme views as to make even the most patriotic of monarchs hesitate before taking his final decision.

¹ For a contemporary's impressions of these three monarchs, cf. Augusto Conti: *Letteratura e Patria*, pp. 325-442.

Deeds, however, speak louder than words, and in 1848-49 Charles Albert risked a great deal more for the cause of Italian unity than many of those who calumniated him. The Piedmontese army, quite unaccustomed to warfare on a large scale, was finally beaten by the Austrians at Novara, and it was on the night of that defeat that the King displayed his real character. At nine o'clock he called together the members of the Royal Family and the generals, and said: "Gentlemen, I have sacrificed myself to the cause of Italian independence; for it I have exposed my life, that of my sons, and my crown; I cannot maintain the struggle. I understand that my person may be an obstacle to the conclusion of a peace now become indispensable; I cannot sign it. Since I have not been able to find death on the battle-field I will make the last sacrifice to my country. I lay down my crown, and abdicate in favour of my son."¹ Charles Albert immediately left Piedmont for Portugal, where he died at Oporto a few months later.

The son to whom Charles Albert bequeathed his crown in such difficult circumstances was Victor Emmanuel II. A more vigorous and decided personality than his father, he was no less determined to achieve the expulsion of the foreigner from the peninsula, and it was fated that he should be the monarch in whose reign the task was accomplished. It is true that he had the great advantage of such coadjutors as Cavour and Garibaldi, but it was due to him that they all worked together. Indeed, on the morrow of Villafranca it was the King who kept his head, not the minister, and it was Victor Emmanuel himself, by his own tact, who won over Garibaldi after the latter's conquest of the Neapolitan kingdom. There is a tendency to exaggerate the importance of the part played by monarchs in the formulation of policy prior to the French Revolution, and to minimize it since that date. Victor Emmanuel II

¹ Quoted by W. J. Stillman: *The Union of Italy*, p. 183.

has suffered from this, for if it is true to say that he could not have made Italy without Cavour and Garibaldi, it is equally certain that they could have effected little without him.¹

The King, too, undoubtedly captured the public imagination of the day in a way, and to an extent, that was of the utmost value to the cause he had at heart. It was not only that the antiquity of the House of Savoy reconciled to the idea of Italian unity a large body of foreign opinion to which the frankly revolutionary appeal of Mazzini was abhorrent, but the bluff heartiness of the monarch endeared him to the masses. He had his weaknesses, like lesser mortals, but they were essentially human, and there was nothing petty or mean about him. In comparison with the shiftiness of the French Emperor, he was candour itself, and the frailties which caused a raising of the eyebrows at Buckingham Palace did him no harm with the man-in-the-street. Alike at Turin, Florence, and Rome he served Italy faithfully, and the best proof of this is the affection in which his memory is held in the peninsula to-day. *Il Re Galantuomo*, the man who sacrificed his beloved Savoy for the sake of united Italy, will be remembered so long as the name of his country endures.

When Victor Emmanuel II died in 1878 Italy was a Great Power in name, but she was a long way from being such in fact, and his son and successor, Humbert, spent twenty-two very difficult years upon the throne. Political conditions in the new kingdom were unnatural, for the Right, to which the monarchy should have been able to look for support, was "Black" as a general rule—that is to say, it was grouped round the Pope,² and refused to have

¹ Cf. Sir John Marriott: *The Makers of Modern Italy*, p. 97.

² This nomenclature only relates to the old Papal States. In Lombardy and Venetia the opponents of the new order were termed *Austriacanti*, in Naples *Borbonici*, etc.

any dealings with the Savoyard. Then, again, the intoxication of the *Risorgimento* was over, and only the headache remained. To the generation which had grown up in the struggle for independence life seemed very drab, and not a few foreign observers declared that Italy had been made too easily and too quickly. Abroad, too, one humiliation succeeded another, and it was the misfortune of Humbert to see his country's prestige reach its nadir. The French occupation of Tunis in 1881 was a reverse which drove Italy into the arms of Germany and Austria, and to this was added fifteen years later the shame of the defeat of the Italian troops by the Abyssinians at Adowa. On all sides there was a feeling of disillusionment, and, as so often in the period immediately following a revolution, in politics the scum rose to the surface.¹ The only statesman of Humbert's reign who was of the first class was Crispi, and when a more or less inadvertent act of bigamy was proved against him, he was forced to retire from public life after the catastrophe of Adowa.

Nor was this the sum of the difficulties which Humbert had to face, for the growing industrialization of parts of Italy had given birth to Socialism of a most violent type. Nowhere was there stability, and in this soil terrorism took root. The Italian anarchist became a familiar figure both in Europe and America, and the last decade of the nineteenth century was marked by a series of brutal murders. In 1894 the President of the French Republic, Sadi-Carnot, was assassinated at Lyons by Sante Caserio; three years later the great Spanish statesman, Cánovas del Castillo, was murdered by Michele Angiolillo at Agueda; and in 1898 the saintly Empress of Austria met her death at the hands

¹ The same was to some extent the case after the Fascist Revolution, as the circumstances attendant upon the murder of Matteotti prove. Signor Mussolini, however, soon purged Fascism of its undesirable elements.

of Luigi Luccheni. Two attempts had been made on Humbert himself earlier in his reign, and these various outrages caused the Italian Government to convoke an international conference in Rome to consider the best method of combating the anarchists, but although the delegates sat for a month they did not accomplish anything of importance,¹ and the next victim was the King of Italy. The decision to murder him was taken at a meeting of anarchists held at Paterson, in New Jersey, and one of those present was detailed for the purpose. This individual, however, lost his nerve, and, after making a full confession to his employer, committed suicide in order to escape the vengeance of his fellow-conspirators. In consequence of this a substitute was found in one Gaetano Bresci, who at once proceeded to Italy, where he practised with a revolver until he had attained proficiency. On July 29th, 1900, Humbert was at Monza, near Milan, and while he was standing acknowledging the cheers of the crowd at the close of a ceremony which he had attended he was mortally wounded by Bresci, who had nicked the bullets in order to render them more deadly.²

The salient characteristics of Humbert were his courage, his loyalty to Italy, and his goodness of heart.³ In the war of 1866 he had distinguished himself by his personal bravery in the field, but he most truly showed what manner of man he was during the epidemic of cholera which ravaged Naples in 1884. About this time the King was invited to be present at a race-meeting at Pordenone, and he excused himself with a telegram containing these words, "*A Pordenone si fa festa, a Napoli si muore; vado*

¹ Cf. Pietro Vigo: *Storia degli ultimi trent'anni del Secolo XIX*, vol. vii, p. 346; and Ferruccio Quintavalle: *Storia dell' Unità Italiana*, p. 409.

² Cf. Eugenio Pedrotti: *Vita e Regno di Umberto I*, p. 235 et seq.

³ Cf. Saverio Cilibrizzi: *Storia Parlamentare, Politica, e Diplomatica d'Italia*, vol. iii, p. 136 et seq.

a Napoli." To Naples he went, and visited the areas most affected with a fearlessness that gained the admiration of even the bitterest opponents of the monarchy. Circumstances prevented Humbert the Good, as his subjects affectionately termed him, from influencing the course of his country's history to the extent that his natural ability would otherwise have enabled him to do, but his mere presence on the throne prevented the centrifugal tendencies from having full play. Even the Left admitted that the monarchy united where a republic would only divide, and after the lapse of a generation it is abundantly clear that a republican Italy would have split up into its constituent parts during the eighties and nineties of last century. In short, it was due to the presence of the House of Savoy upon the throne during these critical years that the work of the *Risorgimento* was not in vain.

Although the attempts of the anarchists were, for the most part, directed against the members of ruling dynasties, the latter were not, it should be observed, responsible for the state of affairs to which anarchism owed its rise. The closing decades of the nineteenth century saw the *bourgeoisie* triumphant in all Europe, and they took advantage of their predominance to drive the proletariat far too hard. The result was that those who had a grievance attempted to avenge it upon society as a whole by striking at the most notable figures. That in all stages of the world's history there have been regicidal maniacs is only too true, but anarchism in these years was too widespread to be explained away in this manner. The failure of the conference called to combat it shows how indifferent the new governing class was to the repeated outrages so long as its own interests were not affected;¹ and it was quite

¹ Similarly, clergymen and pedagogues were not noticeably pacific until the development of aerial warfare threatened the civilian population.

ignorant of the fact that there was already at work in the dominions of the Czar, although under the closest police supervision, an individual who signed his articles "N. Lenin," and who was destined to organize this discontent into the most powerful revolutionary movement the world has ever known. "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"

Troubled as was the reign of King Humbert, it was peaceful compared with that of his son and successor, King Victor Emmanuel III, though in the end the latter has had the satisfaction of seeing the ship of State reach its harbour. The early years of the present King's reign resembled the last decade of that of his father. The disruptive tendencies became ever more marked, and foreign observers began to question how much longer Italy would hold together. The industrial situation grew steadily worse, and revolutionary strikes, which paralyzed the whole economic life of the country, became the order of the day. During this period the real ruler of the country was neither the King, nor Parliament, nor the electorate, but Giovanni Giolitti, who was dictator in all but name. He made and unmade ministries, jerrymandered the constituencies, and administered Italy in a manner upon which Boss Croker himself could not have improved.¹ Unfortunately for himself, he never realized that economic ills cannot be cured by political remedies, and so the Socialist menace grew apace. While the party game was being played in the Chamber according to the rules laid down by Giolitti, revolution was stalking the streets of the great cities, and such was the situation when, in August, 1914, the world found itself at war.

At this critical time the King, however alarmed he

¹ For a detailed account of Giolitti's electoral methods, cf. Gaetano Salvemini: *Il Ministro della Malavita*, *passim*. Giolitti was himself personally honest in financial matters.

might be at the progress of events, continued to observe the Constitution both in the letter and in the spirit. Giolitti was hostile to participation in the war, so no great opposition was displayed to the official refusal of Italy to take the field by the side of Germany and Austria. It was, however, different when the demand for intervention against the Central Powers, largely voiced by Signor Mussolini, began to be made, for the whole influence of Giolitti was thrown into the scale in favour of neutrality. By the spring of 1915 the vast majority of Italians were in favour of war, and the Prime Minister, Antonio Salandra, had already concluded the Treaty of London with the Allied Powers. This was the moment chosen by Giolitti, who was acting in close collaboration with the German ambassador, the now notorious Prince von Bülow, to precipitate a Cabinet crisis as a last desperate effort to avoid intervention. The Prime Minister resigned, and it seemed as if Giolitti had triumphed, and Italy would remain neutral.

As in Great Britain in August, 1931, the monarch acted while the politicians wobbled. King Victor Emmanuel interpreted the wishes of the country far better than the Chamber had done, and he refused to accept the resignation of Salandra; the latter accordingly remained in office, and war was duly declared against Austria. By his action the King certainly prevented internal disturbances upon an extensive scale, and he also gave proof of a political sagacity which was to be displayed on an even more famous occasion eight years later. The success of this manœuvre should not blind us to its boldness, for Giolitti had been the undisputed master of Italy for so long that it seemed impossible that he could be defied with impunity. The fact, of course, was that the King had his finger on the public pulse, while the "Man of Dronero"¹ had not,

¹ One of the many nicknames of Giolitti. Dronero was his constituency.

and so he was able to call the latter's bluff. Had Italy been a republic no President would have dared to act as King Victor Emmanuel did, and the results would have been incalculable both for Italy and for the world. Once more monarchy justified itself as the representative of the national interest as opposed to the factiousness of the politicians.

Throughout the war period the King remained with the army, and he did not return to Rome until the victory had been won. The members of the House of Savoy have always been distinguished for the interest they have taken, and the ability they have displayed, in military affairs, and the present representatives of the dynasty are no exception. The King's presence at the seat of war was no mere matter of form, for he constantly visited all parts of the line, even those that were most exposed to the enemy's fire, and the popularity which he thus won among the soldiers stood the monarchy in good stead in the stormy years that lay ahead, when the memory of Vittorio Veneto was in danger of being forgotten.¹ His Majesty's cousin, the Duke of Aosta, commanded an army; the Duke of the Abruzzi was for a time Commander-in-Chief of the navy; and other cadets of the Royal Family fought with their regiments. The war, in effect, proved that the martial spirit of the Savoyard line was in no way diminished, and this was in marked contrast with the reluctance of the deputies to don a uniform at all. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that the will to victory during these years was exemplified by King Victor Emmanuel, and defeatism by the Chamber.

The four years' interval between the end of the war and the Fascist assumption of power was a sad one for the monarchy, as for all other Italian institutions. The King was insulted by the Socialists on every possible occasion, and

¹ Cf. L. Villari: *The War on the Italian Front*, p. 36.

his very patriotism was made the ground for attacking him. As for the ministers of this period, they were too fearful of their own skins to give the dynasty any effective support, even if they had themselves been convinced monarchists, which, as the creatures of Giolitti, they were certainly not. The King was the embodiment of the national tradition and of the sturdy patriotism that had achieved the independence of Italy. He stood for all the things which Nitti,¹ the Socialists, *et hoc genus omne*, were determined to destroy, and it was apparently a mere question of time when a direct assault would be made upon the throne. Meanwhile, King Victor Emmanuel kept his counsel, and took care not to play into his opponents' hands by any action that could be construed as unconstitutional. He knew his subjects well enough to be sure that in due course they would sweep away the minority of extremists that was oppressing them, and therefore he could afford to bide his time, while the power of Fascism grew with every month that passed.

As the year 1922 drew to its close, events began to move rapidly. On September 29th, at a Fascist conference at Udine, Signor Mussolini for the first time openly declared himself a monarchist. It is true that for some years his republicanism had been traditional rather than active, but this declaration definitely removed the last obstacle to the victory of Fascism, for it rendered impossible such a conflict of loyalties as might otherwise have taken place. On the night of October 27th the March on Rome began. The first blow was struck by Signor Farinacci, who seized Cremona, and by noon of the 28th the strategic centre of Italy was in Fascist hands, as well as the great towns of Milan, Florence, and Naples. The way was now clear for

¹ This gentleman's attitude towards the monarchy is exemplified in the *canard* which he spread to the effect that the Duke of Aosta was engaged in a conspiracy to overthrow the government.

the second stage of the revolution—namely, the occupation of the capital itself. The railway system was wholly under Fascist control, and it was used to concentrate some hundred thousand men at the gates of Rome, where they were massed at Santa Marinella, Monterotondo, and Tivoli for the final attack. Another hundred thousand were gathering in reserve at Foligno, and civil war seemed imminent.

The situation was saved by the King, who, like his grandfather at Villafranca, kept his head when the Prime Minister lost his. Luigi Facta, who was the Premier of the moment, was taken by surprise by the Fascist *coup*, and, like all weak men in a crisis, he at once had recourse to the most violent methods. He ordered the immediate arrest of Signor Mussolini and his principal supporters, and he issued a decree establishing martial law throughout the country. Hardly had this latter action been taken than Facta was reminded that it was illegal without the Royal assent, and when he went to the King to obtain this he was met with a blank refusal. The decree was thereupon withdrawn, and Facta resigned. By adopting this attitude King Victor Emmanuel undoubtedly prevented the outbreak of civil war, and thus proved once again that he was in closer touch with public opinion than were his ministers. In the two most fateful moments of recent Italian history—that is to say, in May, 1915, and in October, 1922—it has been the Crown that has saved the country.

The King, however, was determined that even if there was to be a revolution he would not violate the Constitution which he had sworn to observe, and so he proceeded to follow the usual procedure on the occasion of a ministerial crisis. He accordingly commissioned Salandra to form a Cabinet with Fascist support, whereupon Salandra promptly placed two or three portfolios at Signor Musso-

lini's disposal, an offer which was as promptly refused. By the morning of October 29th it was clear that there was only one solution, and on that day the Fascist leader received instructions from the King to form a ministry. Signor Mussolini, who had remained at Milan, caught the night train from that city to the capital, having characteristically refused to put the country to the expense of a special, and arrived in Rome the following morning to find that it had already been occupied by the Fascists. After a brief visit to his party's headquarters at the Albergo Savoia, he went to the Quirinal, whence he reappeared shortly after noon as Prime Minister of Italy. One of his first acts was to secure a vote of confidence from the Chamber.

The peaceful outcome of this crisis was entirely due to King Victor Emmanuel. His masterly statesmanship, combined with his knowledge of his subjects' wishes, enabled the transition from the Parliamentary to the Fascist regime to take place, not only without bloodshed, but without any violation of the provisions of the Constitution. Every national institution has been remodelled during the past ten years, but no charge of unconstitutional conduct has been, or could possibly be, preferred against the monarch. He had kept his oath "with religious observance,"¹ as Gioberti wrote of his grandfather, and in consequence he has not experienced the embarrassments to which King Alfonso XIII of Spain has been subject owing to the unfortunate failure to get the *coup d'état* of General Primo de Rivera ratified by the Cortes. In this connection tribute must also be paid to the loyalty and patriotism of Salandra, who, on two critical occasions, stood by his master's side. Salandra might well serve as an example of what a monarchist statesman should be, and his memory is revered by his fellow-countrymen for

¹ In his *Rinnovamento civile degli Italiani*.

the part he played in the two crises. Had more of the politicians of pre-Fascist Italy been men of his stamp the Parliamentary System would not have come to stink in the nostrils of all honest men.

From that day to this King Victor Emmanuel and Signor Mussolini have worked together in a manner that is more than a little reminiscent of *Il Re Galantuomo* and Cavour. The enemies of the monarchy and of Fascism, both those in Italy and the *fuorusciti*, have left no stone unturned to sow dissension between the King and the minister: rumours of quarrels between them have been sedulously spread, and no occasion has been neglected of impressing upon the world at large either that the Duce suspects the monarch, or that at heart the latter distrusts Fascism, and everything for which it stands. These efforts to make mischief have one and all failed of their object, and with the passing of the years the mutual respect of the two men has increased. When the inner history of the reign of King Victor Emmanuel III comes to be written, it will be found that in the monarch Signor Mussolini has had his wisest counsellor, and that in the Duce the Crown discovered its strongest support. The genius of the House of Savoy for working with ministers has never been better displayed than in the present instance.

To express surprise at this state of affairs is to display ignorance alike of the fundamental principles of monarchy and of Fascism.¹ The former, if it is to be true to itself, must represent the interests of the nation as a whole as opposed to those of any section or class in it, and this is precisely the basis of Fascism. The latter rejects the old democratic theory that the national interest is the sum of the interests of the individuals that compose the nation. The Fascist State is totalitarian—that is to say, that there is no aspect of the national activity which it regards as outside its

¹ For the latter, cf. Sir Charles Petrie: *Mussolini*, pp. 36-46.

scope, though it does not, like its Socialist rival, desire to control all the energies of its citizens directly unless there is some urgent necessity for doing so. In effect, the aims of hereditary monarchy and of Fascism are identical, so it is little wonder that the two have agreed so well in Italy.

Then, again, neither shares the dislike of democracy for the corporate system, or its passion for equality. In the heyday of the *ancien régime* no attempt was made to suppress the corporations, in many cases the legacy of the Middle Ages, and they were regarded as an essential part of the State. The French Revolution swept them away, and the nineteenth century saw country after country adopt a like course as the principles of 1789 spread across the world. Signor Mussolini, the disciple of Georges Sorel, has reversed this process, and the corporation is the basis of the Italian polity. The Corporate State is receiving the attention of an increasing number of thinkers in all countries,¹ and it is now realized that the abandonment of the corporative system was a blunder of the first magnitude. Had it, for instance, not been destroyed the perfectly legitimate claim of workmen to combine in unions could have been conceded as soon as it was made—that is to say, at the very commencement of the industrial revolution—and so the bitter struggle to obtain their recognition, which poisoned the relations between masters and men for a century, would have been avoided. In view, therefore, of the historic attitude of monarchy towards the principle involved, it is in no way surprising that it should have fitted in so well with the Corporate State in its new form.

It is true that Fascism, or rather a large proportion of the Fascist party, has not always been monarchical, and Signor Mussolini was himself for many years a republican, though never an active one. Indeed, it would probably be

¹ For an account of its working, cf. H. E. Goad: *The Making of the Corporate State*, *passim*.

just to say that the Duce's early republicanism was not due to any dislike of the Italian monarchy as such, but rather to a feeling that the abuses of the national political system could not be removed without a change of regime.¹ When he realized that the King was as desirous of cleansing the Augean stables of Parliamentarianism as he was himself, he at once accepted the monarchy as an institution that is sacrosanct. He has happily defined the King as "*simbolo della Patria, simbolo della perpetuità della Patria,*" and in his first speech in the Chamber after the March on Rome he said: "I believe I am interpreting the thoughts of the majority of the Chamber, or at all events those of the majority of the nation, when I turn in homage to the King, who refused to adopt useless and reactionary measures, who prevented the outbreak of civil war, and who allowed the mighty tide of Fascism to flow into the dry veins of a Parliamentary State."²

The Fascist rank and file were naturally much slower in

¹ "*La democrazia è un regime senza re, ma con moltissimi re talora più esclusivi, tiranici e rovinosi che un solo re che sia tiranno. Questo spiega perché il fascismo, pur avendo prima del 1922—per ragioni di contingenza—assunto un atteggiamento di tendenzialità repubblicana, vi rinuncio prima della marcia su Roma, convinto che la questione delle forme politiche di uno Stato nana è, oggi, preminente e che studiando nel campionario delle monarchie passate e presenti, delle repubbliche passate e presenti, risulta che monarchia e repubblica non sono da giudicare sotto la specie dell' eternità, ma rappresentano forme nelle quali si estrinseca l'evoluzione politica, la storia, la tradizione, la psicologia di un determinato paese. Ora il fascismo supera l'antitesi monarchia-repubblica sulla quale si attardo il democraticismo, caricando la prima di tutte le insufficienze, e apologizzando l'ultima come regime di perfezione. Ora s'è visto che ci sono repubbliche intimamente reazionarie o assolutistiche, e monarchie che accolgono le più ardite esperienze politiche e sociali.*" Benito Mussolini: *La Dottrina del Fascismo, Enciclopedia Italiana*, vol. xiv.

² Quoted by Sir Charles Petrie: *Mussolini*, p. 77.

reaching this conclusion than their leader, and although they accepted the monarchy from the point of view of expediency it was, as Major J. S. Barnes justly observes, "very much in the spirit in which the prophet Samuel reluctantly condescended to the anointing of Saul as the first King of Israel."¹ There was, in effect, toleration of, but no great enthusiasm for, the throne, and such an attitude is in no way surprising. Fascism had drawn its recruits from many quarters, some of them the very reverse of monarchical, and time was required to bring to this section of the party a realization of what the monarchy meant to Italy. During the earlier years, then, of the Fascist regime the Crown was popular in Piedmont, and with the more far-sighted everywhere, but those Fascists who had come from the Left, though possibly convinced of the necessity of monarchical government, did not yet display cordiality where it was concerned.

Furthermore, there can be no doubt that the monarchy had to some extent declined in the public esteem during the four years which elapsed between the termination of the war and the March on Rome. This was in no way the fault of the King, but rather of successive Prime Ministers, who allowed, as has been shown, every national institution to fall into disrepute. The Crown was the symbol of Italian unity, and when that unity was in peril, the monarchy was naturally under a cloud. Such being the case, it took some years for the reaction to make itself felt, though the respect which Signor Mussolini always showed for the monarchical principle did much to accelerate it. The Fascist legions were brought under the control of the State, and their members had to take the oath of allegiance to the King. The Duke of Apulia, now Duke of Aosta, was appointed, at a critical moment, to command against the Senussi, and a series of brilliant victories attested at

¹ *Fascism*, p. 198.

once the wisdom of his appointment and the fact that the military genius of the House of Savoy had in no way deteriorated.

The revival of monarchical sentiment was already becoming marked when the Lateran Treaty gave it an enormous fillip. The division of Italian society into "Blacks" and "Whites" had weakened the throne in exactly the same way as the unfortunate divisions in the House of Bourbon had done in France and Spain, and for some years the dynasty was socially isolated in its own capital. As the generation which remembered the breach at the Porta Pia passed away, the original bitterness was greatly diminished, but it gave place to a contemptuous indifference that was equally damaging to the throne. In the provinces the situation was the same, for if in Naples, Florence, Parma, and Modena there were few who actively desired the return of the old dynasties, there were many who sneered at their successor. The war, it is true, still further modified these feelings, but they continued to exist, and the "Whites" never ceased to mock at the "Blacks" as dull, to which the latter retorted by describing their rivals as disreputable. There was some truth in both accusations, but it was the Crown that suffered most from these recriminations in the long run.

The burial of the hatchet between Church and State had the happiest consequences for the monarchy. It made it possible, for the first time since 1860, for an Italian to be both a good Catholic and a Royalist, and it ranged solidly behind the King all that vast body of religious sentiment which had previously been hostile or indifferent. That the Roman Church is not officially committed to the recognition of any one form of government is true, but history proves that the ordinary Catholic feels happier when his temporal duty is to a King rather than to a republic. So it has been in Italy. The establishment of an undivided

allegiance has been a great comfort to tender consciences, and the visit of the King and Queen to the Vatican marked one of the few real triumphs of the monarchical principle since the war. The temporary revival of ill-feeling between the Papacy and the Italian Government over the activities of the *Azione Cattolica* in no way concerned the monarchy as such, and the growth of monarchical sentiment, both in Fascist and in Catholic circles, has continued unchecked. Not the least important factor in this has been the knowledge that one of the foremost advocates of reconciliation was the King himself.¹

During the past two years the monarchy has become as popular in the rest of the peninsula as it has always been in Piedmont, and there has taken place a development of monarchical sentiment that is most gratifying. With the keen political perception of their race the leading Fascists, thoroughly alive to all that Italy owes to the House of Savoy, realize that the more monarchies there are in Europe the safer will be their own, and they are favourable to the idea of restoration abroad. This does not mean that there is any desire to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations, but rather that those people who wish to see their old dynasties return shall understand that they have the sympathy of Fascist Italy. In the years that followed unification legitimists and *papalini* created a general impression that monarchical feeling in Italy was only skin-deep, and that belief has endured long after it ceased to correspond with the facts. To-day the House of Savoy is as popular among Italians as is the House of Windsor in the British Empire.

The constitutional position of the Crown has been altered somewhat since the establishment of the Fascist regime. In the old days the King selected the Prime Minister in much the same way as the President of the

¹ Cf. Civis Romanus: *The Pope is King*, p. 91.

French Republic does at the present time—that is to say, that when an administration fell the monarch entered upon a series of consultations, first of all with the Presidents of the Senate and Chamber, and then with the leaders of the various parties, with a view to finding someone who could collect a sufficient majority to keep him in office for a time. The first care of Fascism was to free the executive from the control of the factions in the Chamber, and the Head of the Government is now responsible, not to the Chamber, but to the King. The latter appoints him after selection from a panel presented by the Fascist Grand Council, and it is the Head of the Government who nominates and dismisses other ministers. The Grand Council must also be consulted in all constitutional matters, so that any proposals affecting the succession to the throne, the powers of the Crown, or the Royal prerogative would require to come before it.

In fine, the Italian monarchy is stronger to-day than at any period of its history, and the fact that it has commended itself so thoroughly to the greatest statesman of the century is surely no mean argument for the principle which it represents.

Chapter VII

The Spanish Monarchy

THE collapse of the Spanish monarchy in April, 1931, undoubtedly took the world by surprise, and it is generally believed that not one of the ambassadors at Madrid had warned his government that there was any serious prospect of revolution. For centuries Spain has had a by no means undeserved reputation as a country where the expected never, and the unexpected usually, happens, and its recent annals have certainly afforded ground for this charge. King Alfonso XIII had survived so many crises that there seemed to be no reason why he should ever be unseated, while the First Republic had, within living memory, been such a failure that a second essay in republicanism appeared unlikely to recommend itself to the Spanish people. So argued the foreign observer, thinking in terms of the other countries of Western and Central Europe; but the event proved him wrong, and it was typical of Spain that when, for the third time in little more than a century, the House of Bourbon was compelled to go into exile, it should be as the result of local elections in which the monarchists obtained an overwhelming majority. The explanation of this paradox must, however, be sought, not so much in the reign of King Alfonso XIII, as in five centuries of Spanish history. •

The basic weakness of Spain is that she has never been united, and that whenever there appeared to be a reasonable prospect of unity being achieved some event always took place which blighted it. The long centuries of Roman domination had welded the Celtic tribes into one people,

but the arrival of the Vandals, the Suevi, and the Visigoths, in the early years of the fifth century, undid all the good that had been done. The Visigoths were divided from the other inhabitants of the Peninsula by the fact that they were Arians, while the latter were Catholics, and for the first seventy years of their rule they were completely estranged from their subjects. Reccared I became a Catholic in 587, and his conversion began to break down the barriers that had hitherto kept the two races apart to such an extent that until his reign no man of Roman name is found among those who held high office. Moreover, after the extinction of the old Royal House of the Baltings, there was no settled succession to the throne, and of the twenty-three Visigothic Kings of Spain no less than nine were deposed, and of this number seven were murdered by their successors. The average length of their reigns was less than eight years; in eight instances only did a son succeed his father on the throne; and there was but a single case of grandfather, father, and son following each other in undisputed succession. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that the centrifugal forces should have had full play.

Whether Visigothic Spain would ever have become united to the same extent as Merovingian Gaul is a moot point, but in 711 the Arabs arrived to make the existing confusion still worse confounded. That they gained their first foothold in the Peninsula owing to treachery appears indisputable, and, such being the case, the legend of Roderick's passion and Florinda's lost virginity, which owes more to the pen of Southey than to historical evidence, is beside the point.¹ The invaders were by no means united among themselves, as their endless civil wars abundantly prove, and, quite apart from the intro-

¹ Cf. Sir Charles Petrie: *Two Essays in Spanish History*, pp. 11-12.

duction of an alien religion, they brought with them into the Peninsula those causes of disunion which were already at work in the wide dominions of the Caliphs. For many years historians preferred to regard Arab rule in Spain through glasses of roseate hue, and to paint the state of civilization which existed in the reigns of the Emirs and Caliphs of Cordova as comparable in all respects with that of Rome in the days of the Antonines. M. Louis Bertrand has recently¹ exposed this myth, and he has shown quite conclusively that whatever culture there was (and it has been vastly over-rated) in Spain in Arab times was Spanish, not Moslem at all. The legacy of Islam to the Peninsula, in short, was not the preservation of the works of Aristotle, but the establishment of fresh elements of discord, and the ingrafting of several undesirable *traits* upon the national character.

Unfortunately, too, when the work of reconquest was begun it was from several different quarters, and in place of one Christian kingdom there came into existence several. As the Crescent was slowly driven back, Leon, Asturias, Castille, Navarre, Aragon, and Portugal were carved out of the territory that was freed from the Moor, and the story of their contests and alliances with one another is dreary in the extreme. To make matters worse, there was more than one war of succession, and the rival claimants to the throne, particularly in the case of Castille, did not hesitate to call in the aid of the French and the English. In effect, by the time of the marriage of Ferdinand V of Aragon with Isabella I of Castille, which nominally united the greater part of the Peninsula, there was no country in Europe, not even Germany or Italy, which had so anarchic a record as Spain, of which the geographical configuration also favours disunion. Against this background she was suddenly called upon to play the part of the leading Great

¹ In his admirable *Histoire d'Espagne*.

Power, and the marvel is not that she collapsed so soon but that her hegemony lasted so long. Very few nations in the history of the world have effected so much with such scanty resources as Spain, and this fact is primarily due to the influence exercised by the monarchy.

Unfortunately, the Spanish Constitution reflected only too faithfully the centrifugal tendencies that were dominant in the political life of the Peninsula. In all the kingdoms the executive was weak to an extent unknown in contemporary France, save during the reign of Charles VI, and the structure of society was only held together by the fact that it was based on the corporate principle. In each State the Cortes was a factor of the utmost importance, and it enjoyed far more power than the English Parliament or the French States-General.¹ When the union of the crowns of Castille and Aragon took place towards the end of the fifteenth century there was no corresponding union of their assemblies, and there never was one Cortes for the whole country until the days of the Napoleonic invasion. The King of Spain, who seemed to foreigners to bestride the world like a colossus, at home ruled every province by a different title, and was under the continual necessity of cajoling local bodies to grant the necessary supplies for the maintenance of an empire upon which the sun never set. The might of the Most Catholic King abroad and his weakness in the Peninsula is not the least curious of the many paradoxes to be met in Spanish history.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Crown should have exerted every effort to increase its power, and the reign of Philip II was one long struggle to achieve this end. The Inquisition was the means that was found to be most effective for this purpose, and it is doubt-

¹ Cf. Rafael Altamira: *Historia de España y de la Civilización Española*, vol. ii, pp. 70-75, 111-116, and 144-146.

ful whether Spain can ever be satisfactorily governed without the existence of an organization of this type. At any rate, it is a significant fact that the country counted for most in the world while the Inquisition was in full vigour, and that both before its inception and since its abolition internal anarchy should have been the order of the day. That the Inquisition was a Royal rather than an ecclesiastical tribunal is now admitted even by those to whom it makes little appeal, and it is likewise generally conceded that it held Spain together at a most critical time.¹ It is probably true that it was responsible for more than one miscarriage of justice, but omelets cannot be made without the breaking of eggs, and more injustice has probably been perpetrated during the short life of the Second Republic than during all the centuries that the Inquisition held sway. It is impossible to govern mankind without the aid of some extraordinary tribunal of this sort, for in all communities there is a minority for whom the ordinary law has no terrors, and had the Inquisition existed throughout the nineteenth century Spain would in all probability have been both more prosperous and more contented to-day.

The Habsburgs and the earlier Bourbons were foreigners, and they took care not to place too much reliance upon the loyalty of Spaniards for the support of their throne. Of the three companies of Guards under the House of Austria, one was Burgundian, one was German, and one was Spanish; while of the forty-four *tercios* in existence at the death of Philip III in 1621, only seven were Spanish, the rest being composed of Italians, Walloons, Burgundians, Germans, and Irish.² The Bourbons pursued the same policy, though

¹ Cf. W. T. Walsh: *Isabella of Spain*, pp. 258-288.

² Cf. Conde de Clonard: *Historia Orgánica de las Armas de Infantería y Caballería*, *passim*; also Col. Guillaume: *Histoire des Gardes Wallones au service d'Espagne*.

in a modified degree, and as late as the reign of Charles III a third of the infantry regiments in the Spanish service were composed exclusively of Swiss, Irish, Walloons, and Italians. Many foreign names are also to be found among the statesmen, and further evidence of the cosmopolitanism of the Spanish monarchy during this period is afforded by the fact that until the incorporation of the kingdom of Naples in that of Italy the *personnel* of the Spanish and Neapolitan diplomatic services was interchangeable. In short, from the accession of Charles I in 1516 until the deposition of Charles IV in 1808—that is to say, during the time when Spain was a Great Power—she was ruled, administered, and largely defended by foreigners, while her native anarchical tendencies were held in check by the Inquisition.

The natural consequence of this policy on the part of the Crown was that the old Constitution fell into abeyance. The Cortes of Aragon or of Castille was occasionally convoked for the transaction of purely routine business, but that was all. A great deal has been written about the disappearance of this so-called liberty, whereas the fact is that it was quite incompatible with progress. The Cortes represented the factions, and the monarchy embodied the national will, so that it was better that the latter should prevail. The tragedy was that the corporate aspect of the Cortes should have disappeared with the political, so that when, after the loss of America, Spain was, so to speak, thrown back upon herself, there were no native institutions to form the basis upon which a new Constitution could be framed. The result has been that one makeshift after another has been introduced, either from France or from Great Britain, and all touch with the old Spain has been completely lost, while none of the later improvisations has really suited the national genius.

The only secular institution, therefore, that survived

was the monarchy, and the capacity of Spanish politicians during the past hundred years is best attested by the fact that, with one or two exceptions, they have done everything in their power to discredit the one factor that represented the unity of their country—namely, the Crown. The turning-point in modern Spanish history is the French invasion of 1808, and the precedents created by the demagogues who controlled their country's destinies as the consequence of that event have been faithfully followed by their successors. Such being the case, the story of that disturbed period must be viewed from the proper angle if its influence upon the monarchical principle in Spain is to be understood.

The initial blunder, it must be at once confessed, was made by the Royal Family itself in not withdrawing into Andalusia, as soon as Napoleon's intentions became clear, and putting itself at the head of the national resistance to the invader, as King Albert of the Belgians did on a similar occasion. A large part of the responsibility for this mistake, however, rests with the Prime Minister, Godoy, whose vanity and cupidity led him to walk into the trap set by the French Emperor. It is unfortunately also true that neither Charles IV nor the Prince of Asturias, later Ferdinand VII, were ideal representatives of the monarchical principle; indeed, the latter was one of the least satisfactory of modern Kings, though in comparison with the Spanish Liberals he appears in a favourable light. In effect, Spain has only produced four really capable and patriotic leaders since the death of Charles III in 1788: Cánovas and Dato, who were murdered; Primo de Rivera, who died in exile; and King Alfonso XIII, who has now lost his throne. In these circumstances, although nothing could make Ferdinand VII into a model monarch, yet judged by the normal political standards of Spain he was by no means an intolerable ruler. The capacity for govern-

ment is not one of the Spanish national virtues, and this should be borne in mind when assessing the merits of Spanish statesmen.

The captivity of the Royal Family in France not unnaturally threw the whole administration into confusion. The Council of Castille made a hesitating attempt to secure the reins of power, but it was too uncertain of its position, and some of its members were too strongly suspected of sympathy with the invader, for the effort to be successful. Meanwhile, the old centrifugal tendencies were everywhere asserting themselves in the absence of the monarch, and *juntas* sprang up all over Spain. These bodies owed a more or less nominal allegiance to a *junta central*, which changed its place of residence in accordance with the vicissitudes of the military situation, and finally, in 1810, settled at Cadiz, one of the few towns that were not in the possession of the French. There it resigned its powers to a Council of Regency, but before doing so it convoked a Cortes of all Spain in two houses, a provision which was subsequently abandoned in favour of a single chamber. This, of course, was a purely revolutionary measure, in the absence of the King, for no such body was known to the Constitution. It was certainly desirable, in the interests of national unity, that such an assembly should sooner or later be called into being, but the moment when the King was away, and Spain was the battle-ground of contending armies, was not the right one for an essay in the making of constitutions, while the form of the new Cortes was quite unsuited to contemporary conditions. All that was effected was a violent and, as it proved, irreparable breach with the past.

The Cortes met in September, 1810, and it was soon apparent that the majority was determined to take advantage of the suspension of all regular government to put its own Liberal principles into practice. The conduct of

the war against Napoleon was gladly abandoned to the British, and the Cortes devoted itself whole-heartedly to the formulation of the famous Constitution of 1812. The main points in this extraordinary document were that Spain was to be governed by a limited monarchy, with the right of making laws vested in the Crown and a single chamber, and for the election of this latter all males over the age of twenty-five were to vote. The chief effect of its provisions was to place in a subordinate position in the State both the monarchy and the Church—that is to say, the only two national institutions in Spain. The Constitution was the work of *doctrinaires*, and in this, too, it set a precedent to which the Left has ever since faithfully adhered. The expulsion of the French, and the return of Ferdinand VII, relegated, for a time, the Constitution of 1812 to oblivion, but although the King endeavoured to restore in its entirety the *status quo ante bellum* he was unable to do so. Had he been a more estimable character, or had the Royal Family itself remained united, something might have been effected, but as it was the monarchy became the sport of contending factions, and Spain settled down to the anarchy which is her fate when she is not governed by foreigners.

As in France, the divisions in the Royalist ranks were of inestimable service to the Left, for they deprived the throne of the support of those who should have been its protagonists, and they forced the monarchy to depend upon the democrats, to its own ultimate undoing. The schism began in the last years of the reign of Ferdinand VII. That monarch, although he had been married three times, was childless, and his heir was his brother, Don Carlos. In 1830, however, the King entered into matrimony once more, on this occasion with Maria Cristina of Naples, and in due course it was announced that the Queen was pregnant. This event at once raised a constitu-

tional problem of the first importance, and to appreciate the political and personal passions which have since divided the Spanish monarchists it must first of all be remembered that the principle of the succession to the throne had not been settled; indeed, it was very much open to question. The *Siete Partidas* of Alfonso X had recognized the right of females to succeed to the throne of Castille and Leon in default of male heirs of an equally near degree of consanguinity, and that this right had also been admitted in practice is proved by the succession of Isabella I: it was recognized, too, in Aragon, for the claim of Charles I was through his mother, Juana the Mad. With the advent of the Bourbons a change was made, and in 1713 Philip V introduced the Salic Law, which established the French procedure.

The matter was still further complicated by the fact that, for some obscure reason, Charles IV, in 1789, convoked the Cortes in secret session, and on his initiative a resolution was passed asking him to revert to the old order of succession, but the necessary decree had never been promulgated. In March, 1830, Ferdinand VII promulgated the Pragmatic Sanction of Charles IV, and in June of the same year he made a will in which he left the crown to his unborn child. Don Carlos could not, and did not, object to the principle of leaving the crown by will, for it was owing to an act of this nature on the part of Charles II that the Bourbons were in the Peninsula, but he protested against the promulgation of the Pragmatic Sanction. He denied that it was genuine, and declared that, in any case, since he was alive at the date of its enactment it could not be retrospective. Ferdinand at one time gave way, and revoked the Pragmatic Sanction, but he eventually destroyed the revocation, and when a daughter, Isabella, was born, he recognized her as his heir. In 1833 the King died, and thus, in his own words, the cork was removed from the

fermenting and surcharged bottle of Spain.¹ He was certainly not the inhuman monster of Liberal historians, and the greatest disservice that he did his country—namely, the alteration of the order of succession—was due to parental affection.

In retrospect, it is impossible not to regret that Don Carlos did not succeed his brother, Ferdinand VII. Had this happened, the monarchists would not have been divided, and Spain would have been spared two civil wars as well as, almost certainly, two republics. Furthermore, she lost, in the Carlist claimants, the services of monarchs of considerable ability and of high character, while she would have avoided two long and disastrous minorities. The interference of the army in public life dates from the death of Ferdinand, and the *pronunciamiento* would in all probability not have been so prominent a feature of Spanish history had the throne been occupied by Don Carlos and his heirs. Above all, the monarchy would have rested upon a legitimist basis, and this would have enabled the King to work for the interests of the nation in a way that is very difficult for one whose title depends upon Parliamentary sanction. In effect, what the Revolution was to the monarchy of England the disinheritance of Don Carlos was to that of Spain, and all the latter's recent troubles have their origin in the succession of Isabella II in place of her uncle.

It is fortunately unnecessary to trace in any detail the events of Isabella's troubled reign. As in the days of Henry IV of Castille, the Crown became a mere puppet in the hands of the factions, and these latter, in their turn, were controlled by military adventurers. The Queen, as has been shown, had no principle upon which to base her rule, and there was no section of the community to which she could turn for support with any certainty of finding it,

¹ Cf. Butler Clarke: *Modern Spain*, p. 89.

for the natural defenders of throne and altar were gathered under the standard of Don Carlos. In these circumstances the monarchy was forced to rely on chance groupings in the Cortes, and this meant concessions that were detrimental to the true interests of Spain. The army was in a perpetual state of mutiny, and the generals thought more of seizing the reins of government than of enforcing discipline among their men. Indeed, a more excellent example of the old truth that the monarchy's extremity is the factions' opportunity could hardly be found than the Spain of Isabella II, and that the country made any material progress during this period was due, not to its politicians, but to the fact that Sancho Panza always sees Don Quixote through in the long run.

In 1868 there was a revolution which in its essence was a forecast of that of 1931. A small minority drove the Bourbons from the throne, and Isabella II, like her grandson on the later occasion, preferred to go into exile rather than to light the fires of civil war. For two years the Crown was, literally, hawked round Europe, and, as in the previous century, the question of the Spanish succession resulted in the outbreak of hostilities, in this instance between France and Germany. Eventually an Italian prince, Amadeo of Savoy, was called to the throne, which he occupied uneasily for a brief space, and then abdicated. The First Republic then came into being, and in view of its record it is impossible to feel surprise at the misrule that is so prominent a feature of its successor. The Carlists at once declared war on the regime, and several provinces passed out of the control of the Madrid government. There were three Presidents within a year, and each of them represented a different form of republic. The Spanish fleet was seized by the extremists, and to prevent it embarking upon a piratical career in the Mediterranean it was interned at Gibraltar by the British authorities. The

credit of Spain abroad reflected the chaos at home. On December 31st, 1873, the 3 per cent. Exterior Debt was quoted on the London Stock Exchange at $17\frac{1}{4}$, and the coupons on this issue remained unpaid for eighteen months, having to be refunded later by the government of the Restoration.¹

In these circumstances the *pronunciamiento* of General Martinez Campos in favour of Isabella's son, Alfonso XII, met with widespread support, and in 1875 the latter ascended the throne of his ancestors. Although the movement for the restoration of the monarchy was thus military in its origin, the foremost statesman was a civilian, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, and he it was who set Spain upon the course which she followed for a generation. The Constitution which was adopted at his suggestion was modelled upon that of Great Britain, though the administration of the country continued to be along French lines. In reality, the whole affair was an elaborate sham. There were, it is true, two parties, a Conservative and a Liberal, led by Cánovas and Sagasta respectively, but the elections were notoriously "made" so that a Conservative and a Liberal majority should alternate. The vast majority of the electors were illiterate, and political power resided in the *cacique*, or local "boss." At the same time, it would be quite unfair to blame Cánovas for his action. The King's title was not a good one, and the staunchest monarchists were the followers of Don Carlos. Moreover, he hoped that in due course the Constitution would take firm root, and as he had given both the Crown and the Church a considerable part in it he had some grounds for believing that in the long run it might prove not unsuited to the national genius.

¹ Cf. D. Hannay: *Don Emilio Castelar*; H. R. Whitehouse: *The Sacrifice of a Throne*; and A. Houghton: *Les Origines de la Restauration des Bourbons en Espagne*.

For some years there was every reason to suppose that this hope would be justified. Spain survived without any serious threat of disturbance the premature death of Alfonso XII, and the long minority of his son, which included the disastrous war with the United States. Materially, too, she prospered, but the Constitution continued to be a farce. So long as Cánovas and Sagasta lived the outward appearances of the Parliamentary System were decently preserved, but when they died the parties they had led began to break up into groups. Canalejas possibly, and Dato certainly,¹ might have infused fresh life into the Constitution, but of the numerous other Prime Ministers during this period those who were not corrupt were incompetent, and many were both.² The centrifugal tendencies once more began to make themselves felt, and the political life of the country degenerated into the internecine strife of the various groups, engendered by the jealousies of their respective leaders. To make matters worse, there were revolutionary strikes in all parts of the country, and in 1909 there took place disturbances in Barcelona that for a time seemed to herald another essay in republicanism. "My guns were in the pockets of the ministers," Admiral Cervera is reported to have observed to his American captors, and the remark well illustrates the conditions of Spanish public life at the time it was uttered.

Such being the case, King Alfonso found himself compelled more and more to take the exercise of power into his own hands. For days at a time there was no ministry, and when decisions had to be made the monarch was the only person who could make them. On the other hand, he

¹ For an account of his career and policy, cf. Ramón Peris: *Dato y Su Vida*.

² The Spain of those days is well described in the famous novel of El Caballero Audaz, *El Jefe Político*.

had no capable advisers, and although material progress was considerable, Spain was still very poor, and physically she was exhausted after her efforts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She had thrown herself into the colonization of the New World with all the ardour of procreation, and the reaction was inevitable.¹ A fog of pessimism, which not even the activity of the young King could disperse, settled down upon the country, and Spain became, in foreign eyes, the synonym for a nation that had had its day.

The war which began in 1914 transformed Spain. It brought her riches which she had not known since the wealth of the Indies had been poured into her lap in the days of the *conquistadores*, and whole districts were industrialized almost overnight to supply the demands of the Allies. Stock of all kinds attained prices never known before, and as Spain resolutely adhered to her neutrality she reaped the maximum benefit from the conflict. At the same time, this wave of prosperity increased the growing dissatisfaction with the governmental machine, for the politicians proved quite incapable of taking advantage of what was happening to initiate a real national revival. They continued to play the old wearisome game of "ins" and "outs" with never a thought to the chance they were missing of setting Spain on its feet again for all time. As the leading neutral, she should have played a very prominent part indeed both in the peace settlement and in the post-war era, and that she did not do so, save during the tenure of office of General Primo de Rivera, was due to her political leaders.

The one Spaniard who enhanced his country's reputation during these critical years was the King. The work

¹ Cf. the mediæval commentator of Aristotle: "*Omne animal post coitum est triste, præter gallum, gallinaceum, et sacerdotem gratis fornicantem.*"

which he did, at his own personal expense, on behalf of prisoners is in itself sufficient to counterbalance all the charges that his enemies have brought against him on other counts. For this purpose he maintained a secretariat of forty clerks, and the cost of postage alone was over a million pesetas. Nor was this by any means all, for King Alfonso exerted both diplomatic and personal pressure for the relief of suffering humanity. His initiative led to the cessation of reprisals in Germany against French prisoners, he took up strongly the case of the civil population of Lille, and he never ceased to protest against the horrors of submarine warfare. Eight sentences of death on women, and twenty on men, were commuted in consequence of his intervention, while had the Marqués de Villalobar, the Spanish minister at Brussels, had time to communicate with Madrid, Edith Cavell would assuredly not have been shot. It is well that these things should be remembered now when those on whose behalf King Alfonso toiled are so ready to denigrate him, though the reception which was accorded to him both in Paris and London after the Spanish Revolution is evidence that the people of France and England had not forgotten the part he played in the war, even if their leaders preferred to do so. King Alfonso, like his relatives, the Emperors Francis Joseph and Charles of Austria, regarded war in the old chivalrous spirit, which democrats and nationalists find it impossible to comprehend.¹

Hardly had the war come to an end than the Moroccan question in an acute form came to occupy Spanish attention, and in view of the extent to which the King's name has been mentioned in this connection it is important that the true facts should be widely known. Ever since the

¹ A full account of the King's activities at this time is to be found in H.R.H. Princess Pilar of Bavaria and Major D. Chapman-Huston: *Don Alfonso XIII*, pp. 181-192.

middle of the nineteenth century the affairs of the Shereefian Empire had been closely followed in the Peninsula, and for France and Spain the Moorish kingdom presented much the same problem as the future of Turkey had raised for Russia and Austria at the other end of the Mediterranean. In the early years of the present century events began to move rapidly. In concluding the Entente with France, Great Britain renounced her interest in Morocco, and, as a result of the Algeiras Conference of 1906, France and Spain were given a free hand in that country. The increasing weakness of the Sultan's administration a few years later resulted in the two Powers dividing Morocco into zones of influence, and, within her sphere, Spain began the task of civilization. In July, 1921, this was rudely interrupted by the surprise and annihilation at Annual of the army of General Silvestre by the Moors under Abd-el-Krim. Not only was this one of the worst disasters that European troops have ever sustained at the hands of natives, and not only did the Spaniards lose at a blow all that had been gained by fourteen years of strenuous warfare, but subsequent investigation showed that successive governments had ignored the advice of their advisers, and that, if the immediate cause of the catastrophe was the temerity of General Silvestre, the real responsibility lay with the politicians in Madrid.¹

From that day to this no effort has been spared by the Left to hold King Alfonso responsible for the Annual disaster.² It is alleged that he ordered General Silvestre to advance more rapidly than the military situation warranted,

¹ Cf. the author's article in *The Army Quarterly*, vol. xi, pp. 33-42.

² This particular hare was started by Blasco Ibañez in his *Alphonse XIII Demasqué*, and in this country Mr. Wickham Steed naturally gave all the prominence to it that he could in the *Review of Reviews*, which he then edited.

and unknown to the Minister of War and the High Commissioner in Morocco. Not one shred of evidence has ever been brought forward in support of this charge, although ever since April, 1931, the republicans have had the State archives at their disposal. Silvestre was a rash and impetuous commander, and he certainly needed no prompting to plunge into the mountains of the Riff without having made adequate preparation. The accusation against King Alfonso was all part and parcel of the campaign to calumniate the monarchy, and the attempt to implicate him in the overthrow of Silvestre has as much foundation in fact as would have a similar effort to hold King George V responsible for the surrender of Kut, or Queen Victoria for the death of Gordon.¹

Annual brought to a head the discontent that had long been growing in the Peninsula, and as the only Parliamentarian of any ability, Dato, had been murdered earlier in the year it was obvious that a violent change of some sort was inevitable ere long. In addition to the strain of the Moroccan campaign Spain was suffering from internal disorders of the most serious nature. All the native anarchy of the race came to the surface, and revolutionary strikes, accompanied by bloodshed, were everywhere the order of the day. Communist emissaries would appear at a factory, and compel the men employed there to cease work without assigning any reason for their action, and such was the terror they inspired that they were rarely disobeyed. Murders were perpetrated with impunity, and even on the rare occasions when the criminals were caught, the jury invariably acquitted them out of fear of the consequence to themselves of a conviction. In June, 1923, the disorders reached their climax in the brutal assassination of the

¹ The best account of Spanish action in Morocco is to be found in Juan de España: *La Actuación de España en Marruecos*, *passim*.

Cardinal Archbishop of Zaragoza, and on September 13th General Primo de Rivera made the *pronunciamiento* that resulted in the establishment of a Military Directory, known to the outside world as a dictatorship.

In the campaign against the monarchy the facts of this *coup d'état* have been so distorted by interested parties that it is safe to say that at this late date they are unknown to the ordinary foreigner. King Alfonso has been so often reviled as a despot who subverted the free institutions of his unhappy country by the imposition of military rule, that large numbers of otherwise intelligent people have come to believe that such was actually the case. The British press, with two or three exceptions,¹ has contributed to this result by giving prominence to all republican propaganda, and by refusing a hearing to the other side of the case; for it is a curious fact that however strongly Conservative a British newspaper may be in home affairs it is, with the exceptions already mentioned, generally on the Left where other countries are concerned. So it has been in the case of Spain, and for years a campaign of vilification was conducted against King Alfonso and the Spanish Royal Family. Republics, on the contrary, are dear to the heart of Fleet Street, and the present regime in Spain is no exception, for the tyranny that characterizes it is never mentioned, let alone censured: even the wholesale suspension of newspapers has not evoked a protest. In these circumstances, it is of the utmost importance to understand the position that confronted the King of Spain in September, 1923.

In the first place, whatever may be said now, there can be no shadow of doubt but that General Primo de Rivera had the vast majority of the nation behind him. The Cortes, and everything for which it stood, was regarded

¹ Notably the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Morning Post*, and the *Daily Mail*.

with unmitigated contempt by the ordinary Spaniard, who had been cut to the quick by the Annual disaster; and so long as the stranglehold of the old politicians was relaxed it was generally felt that the end justified the means. Moreover, the Spanish army, like the Roman, has often been a truer index to the state of popular feeling than any elective assembly, and so it was on this occasion. The *coup d'état* was as widely supported in Spain as the March on Rome had been in Italy the year before, and in acquiescing in the establishment of the Directory the King was undoubtedly interpreting the wishes of his subjects, save for a handful of *políticos* and *caciques*. If that be the duty of a monarch, as the democrats maintain, then King Alfonso clearly did nothing worthy of blame. Nor was this all, for the politicians themselves were flying in all directions, and even if resistance was desirable it was clearly impracticable.¹

In view of the part played by these events in the subsequent downfall of the monarchy, the character and previous career of the new master of Spain are facts of the utmost importance. Miguel Primo de Rivera y Orbaneja, Marqués de Estella, was born at Jerez de la Frontera in 1870, and he came of a family that had played a prominent part in the recent history of Spain. His uncle, whom he succeeded in the title, was a prominent figure in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and it was at his hands that Miguel received his early training. The former had twice been Governor-General of the Philippines, and, in his later days, he occupied a position in Spain analogous to that of the Duke of Wellington in England during the last years of his life. Miguel Primo de Rivera entered the army as a matter of course, and at the age of twenty-three he was awarded the Cross of San Fernando (First Class)

¹ For the other side of the case, cf. Conde de Romanones: *Las Responsabilidades del Antiguo Regimen*, *passim*.

for conspicuous bravery in the field in Morocco, while he subsequently saw service both in the Philippines and in Cuba. When hostilities commenced in Morocco in 1909 he at once petitioned to be sent to the front, and he remained in Africa until he was severely wounded two years later. The talents of Primo de Rivera now began to attract the attention of successive governments, and in 1915 he was appointed Governor of Cadiz, while four years afterwards he became Captain-General of Madrid. His tenure of both these posts, however, was terminated abruptly because his outspokenness was distasteful to the politicians, whose intrigues he knew were fatal to the progress of the country. He publicly demanded that negotiations should be commenced with Great Britain for the restitution of Gibraltar, and he criticized the Moroccan policy of one administration after another with the skill of an expert and the vehemence of a patriot. In spite of these checks, his upward career was only temporarily delayed, and in 1922 he became Captain-General of Catalonia, which post he held when he organized his bloodless *coup d'état* of the following year.

In character General Primo de Rivera was very far from the ruthless tyrant that he was depicted by his enemies. He possessed an unfailing courtesy, which is illustrated by the fact that he found time to write a personal letter of thanks to an English lady who had congratulated him at a critical moment of the Moroccan campaign. He had an almost English dislike of anything in the nature of ostentation; when he returned to Madrid after the final victory over Abd-el-Krim, he entered the capital unrecognized, while his ordinary life was in no way changed after his assumption of power; he dined at his club like any other member, and when he went to the theatre he slipped into his seat like anybody else. He was a devoted son of the Church, but he was no bigot in religious matters, though

one of the mistakes of his administration was that it favoured the regular, at the expense of the secular, clergy. He was absolutely fearless, which commended him above all else to his fellow-countrymen, and he was an indefatigable worker. At the same time, Primo de Rivera was a soldier above all else, and he applied to politics the rules that govern strategy. As the years went by he encountered difficulties which his training did not enable him to understand, and he became a very lonely figure.

The tragedy of recent Spanish history is that the King was not the complement of the General. There existed between the two men an antipathy which has had the most profound and unfortunate consequences, and undoubtedly was one of the main causes of the fall of the monarchy. The relations between a sovereign and a powerful minister must necessarily require careful adjustment, but that they may be cordial is proved by such notable combinations as those of Louis XIII and Richelieu, Victor Emmanuel II and Cavour, and the present King of Italy and Signor Mussolini. On the other hand, the harm that may be done where sympathy does not exist is shown in the cases of the Emperor William II and Bismarck, and King Constantine and M. Venizelos. Primo de Rivera had one serious defect in his character, and that was his failure to appreciate the force of tradition. He thus tended to ignore the Crown, and, on one occasion at least, had toyed with the idea of replacing King Alfonso by the Infante Don Juan. Later, the relations of the two men, though never cordial, improved somewhat, but the result of their misunderstanding was in the long run that the King received all the blame, and none of the credit, for the acts of the Directory.

That the administration of General Primo de Rivera conferred enormous benefits upon Spain is certain, and had it lasted twenty years it would have restored that country to the position which it had held in the past.

With all his faults, the Marqués de Estella was the greatest Spanish statesman since Cisneros and Mendoza, and now that it is the fashion to decry both him and his Royal master it is well that the accomplishments of his government should not be forgotten. In the first place, he restored Spanish prestige in Morocco, and he pacified the Riff so that it became as safe as any province of Spain itself. He enforced law and order throughout the Peninsula, so that during his rule Spain was one of the most peaceful countries in Europe, and all this was done without any interference with the social liberty of the individual. New roads were made, existing communications were improved out of all recognition, and vast irrigation schemes were put into execution. The most friendly relations were established with Latin America, and so high did Spain stand in the counsels of the world that she was elected to a semi-permanent seat upon the Council of the League of Nations. For a brief space it seemed as if Spain was once again to be a Great Power, and was in the course of such a revival as contemporary Italy was experiencing. This was not to be, and the apparent renaissance was shown to be a mere flash in the pan; but now, in the dark night of republican tyranny and incompetence, there are very many Spaniards who look back with regret on the golden days of General Primo de Rivera, *El Salvador de España* as he was so justly termed.¹

Unfortunately, as it is with men so it is with regimes: the evil that they do lives after them, while the good is forgotten, and this has been the fate of the Spanish Directory. It made singularly few mistakes, but they were serious ones, and they had fatal consequences.

The initial blunder was the omission to get the *coup d'état* ratified by the Cortes. So overwhelmingly was public

¹ An admirable account of Spain under the Directory is to be found in C. W. Armstrong: *Life in Spain To-Day*.

opinion on the side of General Primo de Rivera that he would have secured an enormous majority had he demanded full powers, and in that case he would have been able to transform Spain at his will without laying either the King or himself open to the charge of illegality. In similar circumstances the first act of Signor Mussolini was to obtain a vote of confidence from the Italian Chamber, with the result that however much his opponents may dislike his actions they have never been able to denounce them as unconstitutional. The failure on the part of General Primo de Rivera to adopt a similar line of conduct was largely due to his ignorance of, and contempt for, Parliamentary procedure: it was widely believed in Spain at that time that the Cortes was an effete institution which had had its day, and the Marqués de Estella undoubtedly held this view himself. The lack of sympathy with his master was also a secondary cause of his neglect of the Cortes. King Alfonso knew that one day public opinion would change, and that as he had taken an oath to respect the Constitution, while Primo de Rivera had not, it was he who would be held responsible for the breach of it. The two men were, however, unhappily too far apart to agree, and it would almost certainly have cost the King his throne to have insisted upon the convocation of the Cortes, though, in the end, his neglect to do so had much to do with achieving the same result. King Alfonso considered that the Constitution was suspended, and such was the case, but, as it contained no provision for its temporary suspension, he was, in law, acting in an unconstitutional manner. Of course, the Constitution had so often been disregarded in the past that one more violation of it did not seem to matter, but in this case it eventually placed a very effective weapon in the hands of the enemies of the throne.

A second mistake related to the army. After the estab-

lishment of the Directory it was universally hoped and believed that the latest *pronunciamiento* would prove to be the last. With the victorious close of the war in Morocco an excellent opportunity presented itself for the abolition of conscription, and for the reform of the army as a voluntary professional force on the British model. Such a step would at once have provided the monarchy with a shield that would have protected it in every emergency, and it would have earned the undying gratitude of the poorer classes, who have always regarded conscription as an intolerable burden. On the other hand, the maintenance of a large and useless army was not only a very great drain upon the national finances, but was also a direct inducement to ambitious generals to play a part in politics. Even the Directory, with a soldier at its head, was continually in difficulties with the army. The success with which the Second Republic has placed the military under civil control (the solitary benefit that it has conferred upon Spain) shows that the army was but a bogey, and had it been reformed along the lines already mentioned, its efficiency would have been increased, and the security of the throne ensured. Why this was not done it is impossible to conjecture, and the reason is probably to be found in the *malaise* that existed between the King and his minister.

The crowning error was the failure to take advantage of the enthusiasm which the establishment of the Directory aroused. It is true that the new government, in marked contrast with that of Signor Mussolini, was imposed from above, but public opinion was at first so overwhelmingly on its side that it could have remodelled the whole life of the country without encountering any serious opposition. Where General Primo de Rivera failed was in not creating a movement like Fascism, which could have harnessed to the service of the State the enthusiasm engendered by the collapse of the Parliamentary System. There was, it is true,

the *Unión Patriótica*, but it never took any real root, and it was composed, for the most part, of time-servers and place-hunters who wished to stand well with those in authority. It may be that the natural apathy of the Spaniard would have made such a scheme impracticable, but it was never attempted on a sufficient scale to test this. Furthermore, Primo adopted so mild an attitude towards his enemies as to make the Fascist principle of the totalitarian State extremely difficult of application, and had he shot a few of the more mischievous agitators, or at least confiscated their property, his own supporters would have been encouraged, and his opponents proportionately depressed.

The end came at the beginning of 1930, when General Primo de Rivera, whose health was giving way under the strain of his position, realized that he could no longer depend upon the army. In his perplexity, due to his illness, he instituted a referendum of the commanders of the various military districts as to the advisability of his retention of office.¹ This was, of course, a violation of the Royal prerogative, and left the King no choice but to dismiss the minister. Primo de Rivera was the first to acknowledge the mistake he had made, and he did so in a manner that redounded to his credit. He left Spain for Paris, where he died a few weeks later, an outstanding example of the ingratitude of nations towards their benefactors.

The disappearance of General Primo de Rivera from the political stage left two courses open to King Alfonso. He could either establish a Royal dictatorship, as had been done by King Alexander of Jugo-Slavia, or he could

¹ General Carmona, the Portuguese dictator, had adopted this expedient a few months before, and it may well be that General Primo de Rivera was influenced by this example. The difference between the two cases lay in the fact that Spain was a monarchy and Portugal a republic; though, of course, the rightful King of the latter was H.R.H. Dom Duarte Nuño.

attempt to return to normal constitutional conditions at the earliest possible moment. The decision was probably the most momentous that the monarch had been forced to take throughout the course of his reign, and it was the more unfortunate that only twelve months earlier death had robbed him of the wisest of his counsellors—namely, his mother, Queen Maria Cristina, who had guided her adopted country through so many storms.

The first alternative had much to recommend it. Spain was overwhelmingly monarchical, and those who were ready enough to conspire against the King's ministers might well hesitate to attack the King himself. It would admittedly have been to stake everything on a single throw, but this risk had to be taken whatever line was adopted. On the other hand, the whole tradition of the reigning branch of the House of Bourbon was against autocracy, and those who, in another country, would have supported their monarch in such a policy, in Spain were the adherents of the Carlist claimant, Don Jaime. King Alfonso, therefore, determined to retrace his steps, and General Berenguer was appointed to succeed General Primo de Rivera, while a speedy return to the old Constitution now became the order of the day. Whatever may, on the score of political strategy, be urged against this policy, it is surely a complete answer to those who accuse King Alfonso of a determination to destroy the Constitution at all costs. The monarch who had this end in view would hardly have appointed a Prime Minister with instructions to set the old constitutional machinery in motion again at the earliest possible moment.

The new administration had not been in office for more than a few weeks before the chaotic political condition of the country became painfully apparent. The government of the Directory had broken the old Conservative and Liberal parties, and only the purely revolutionary organizations

remained intact, if underground. General Berenguer, to give him his due, appreciated these facts, and he wished to hold the elections before the Left had gathered sufficient strength to become a real menace to the existing order. In this desire he was opposed by certain monarchist politicians who wished, by first of all removing the officials appointed by the Directory, to "jerrymander" the constituencies in such a way as to secure the return of a majority of their own adherents, and in this manner to enable them to become the arbiters of their country's destiny. In vain the Prime Minister argued that the only way to avert revolution was to elect a Cortes at the earliest possible moment, and thus to restore legality in the most favourable conditions for the Crown. The politicians, as ever, only looked upon the throne as a pawn in their own game, and regarded no other interest than that which they fondly believed to be their own. They refused to listen to General Berenguer, and by representing that the only constitutional course was to hold the local elections first, they unfortunately gained the ear of the King. In this way the General Election was repeatedly postponed throughout the year 1930, while the Left gained in strength every day by asserting that the government never intended to hold the elections at all.

At this point there took place the insurrection at Jaca, and the consequent proclamation of a state of siege, with the result that a further postponement of the appeal to the country became necessary. By this time the politicians had decided to get rid of General Berenguer altogether, as an obstacle in their path, and so they bluntly declared that they would not take part in the elections even when they were held. This action certainly succeeded in its object of bringing about the fall of General Berenguer, but it sealed the fate of the monarchy itself, which may be said to have collapsed because of the selfishness of those

very politicians who most loudly proclaimed themselves its supporters. Nevertheless, it is impossible to acquit the Prime Minister himself of a considerable amount of the blame. The probity of General Berenguer is above question, but he has never been the man to exercise effective control over others, and he was as little able to check the Conde de Romanones in the field of politics as he had been capable of making General Silvestre obey his orders in the mountains of the Riff ten years before. Unfortunately, too, neither he nor his Royal master realized that these selfsame politicians no longer had any followers worth the name; and not the least serious of the many mistakes made at this time was that of taking the old party hacks at their own valuation. In short, if he was not by nature a believer in a *dolce far niente* policy, the result of his tenure of office was as disastrous as if such had been the case.

The resignation of General Berenguer was followed by the return to power, under the Premiership of Admiral Aznar, of the old politicians whom the vast majority of Spaniards, whatever their political opinions, hoped the Directory had driven out of public life for ever. Back they all came at the King's request, and from the moment that they were seen trooping once more into the Royal Palace at Madrid the advent of the republic was a mere matter of time. The traditional defenders of the throne had little stomach for a fight to protect those whom they profoundly mistrusted, while the revolutionaries gleefully pointed out that the Crown had now so closely associated itself with the "old gang" that it was hopeless to attempt to get rid of the latter without also abolishing the former.

Such was the position when the local elections were held on April 12th, 1931. The complete returns have never been published, but a recent authoritative work¹ throws considerable light upon the matter. Of the councillors

¹ J. C. Cabanillas: *La Caída de Alfonso XIII.*

elected no less than 22,150 were monarchists, as against 5,875 republicans. With the exception of the four Catalan provinces, Huesca, and Biscay, the result was wholly favourable to the existing order, though it is true that its opponents had won a majority in most of the larger towns. In short, the voting was a warning that the country did not want the old politicians back in office, but it was nothing more. What the ministry should have done, had it been composed of patriotic men, was to have proclaimed martial law in those towns where there was any possibility of trouble, and then, when order had been restored, to have placed its resignation in the hands of the King.

What the ministry did was something very different—namely, to lose its head. Following the lead of the Prime Minister, its members forgot the interests of Spain and of the monarchy in their determination to save their own skins, and Admiral Aznar declared to the press that the country had gone republican overnight. As if this were not enough, General Berenguer, the Minister of War, issued, without consulting his colleagues in the Cabinet, to the Captains-General throughout Spain the following almost incredible document:

The municipal elections have given the result your Excellency may suppose from what has happened in the district of your command. The poll indicates the rout of monarchist candidates in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, and the principal capital towns. The elections have been lost. This creates a most delicate situation, which the Cabinet will have to consider when full data are to hand. At this supreme juncture your Excellency will appreciate the absolute necessity of maximum serenity, with hearts raised in the service of the highest interests of the nation, which the army is called upon to defend at all times. Your Excellency

should maintain close contact with the garrisons under your orders, calling upon all to have complete confidence in the higher command, maintaining discipline at all costs, ready to give what help may be needed to maintain law and order. This will be the guarantee that the destiny of Spain shall continue without grave disturbances along the lines imposed by the supreme national will.

As the Madrid correspondent of *The Times* rightly observed:¹ "If the Republican Committee itself had been called upon to circularize the military commanders, it could hardly have drawn up instructions better calculated to serve the purpose of paving the way for a peaceful monarchist surrender."

The incompetence of some ministers, and the disaffection of others, recall the *Trois Glorieuses* of 1830, but Charles X was at least able to rely upon the loyalty of a sufficient number of his troops to secure a dignified and unimpeded withdrawal to the coast. King Alfonso was denied even this consolation, for General Sanjurjo, who commanded the Guardia Civil, now announced that he was unable to answer for his police, and his example was followed by all those upon whose devotion the King had the greatest claim. It would, indeed, be difficult to find words strong enough to describe the contempt which every honest man must feel for the behaviour of the aristocracy and official classes in Spain at this critical moment in their country's history. One and all they joined in a mad rush towards the republican band-waggon, and the boasted chivalry of the Spaniard was hardly evidenced by the abandonment of the Queen and the Infantas in the Royal Palace surrounded by a howling mob of revolutionaries. In these circumstances it is satisfactory to know that the

¹ *The Times*, July 29th, 1932.

treachery of the old governing class has been of no avail. Within eighteen months of those fateful April days the Iscariot of the revolution, Sanjurjo, was serving a long sentence of imprisonment for attempting to overthrow the regime he had done more than any other single man to establish; the erstwhile officials of the monarchy had been dismissed from their posts; and the nobles had seen their estates confiscated, generally without compensation. Loyalty, like honesty, is often the best policy.

Mention has already been made of the attitude of the British Government, of which Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was then head, at this time. As in the case of the Czar, the leading monarchical Power in the world displayed the utmost unconcern as to the fate of the Spanish Royal Family, and during the night that the Queen, herself the first cousin of King George, spent in the Royal Palace with the mob demonstrating beneath the windows no one came from the British Embassy. What the official instructions of the Foreign Office were is, of course, unknown, but in view of the political complexion of the administration in office, and of the fact that Mr. Arthur Henderson was Foreign Secretary, one might hazard a guess. Even so, some ambassadors would have risked their careers to assist a woman in danger, but Sir George Grahame apparently did not take this view.

The causes of the collapse of the Spanish monarchy deserve the most careful attention, and by no means the least important of them was the fact that King Alfonso had become out of touch with large sections of his subjects. He had, over a period of years, made himself so popular in Great Britain and France that it was not realized abroad how isolated he had of late become in his own country. In his wholly admirable work, *Spain's Uncertain Crown*, Mr. Robert Sencourt very rightly says of the monarch: ¹

¹ Pp. 345-346.

"He stopped short somewhere of attaining to communion with his country's intellectual leaders. . . . His greatest painter, Zuloaga, was never summoned to his Court. His most popular novelist, Ibañez, was provoked to write a vulgar diatribe against him. His most famous scholar and thinker, Don Miguel de Unamuno, was banished. . . . Every type of thoughtfulness was alien to Don Alfonso, and even when he visited a school or university, the Duke of Miranda, his major-domo, arranged that he should speak with no one but those in a brilliant social position, or else the successful sportsman. The scholars did not count."

In effect, this is but another example of the common mistake of monarchs to ignore those who mould their subjects' opinion, though it is carefully avoided by the greatest of them, by a Louis XIV or a Charles II. Such an attitude drives those who could be of considerable assistance to the throne into the ranks of its opponents, and such was the case with King Alfonso.

Then, again, it must be admitted that by his opposition to regionalism he forced the growing demand for decentralization to take an anti-monarchical form. In this matter the King allowed the influence of his Capet and Bourbon ancestors to carry the day against his Habsburg forebears, with the disastrous consequence that the richest part of Spain—namely, Catalonia—became the most disaffected. This passion for excessive centralization has wrought havoc in Spain ever since Philip V first crossed the Pyrenees. It was largely responsible for the loss of America,¹ and it was one of the most potent factors in bringing about the recent revolution. Among King Alfonso's many titles is that of Count of Barcelona, and it would not have been difficult to have satisfied Catalan aspirations without in any way weakening the throne.

¹ Cf. Cecil Jane: *Liberty and Despotism in Spanish America*, p. 94 et seq.

The ministers of the monarchy, including General Primo de Rivera, would have none of it, with the result that Catalonia became another Ireland, and for much the same reason. Home Rule has been accorded by the Second Republic, and this *fait accompli* will have to be recognized at the Restoration. The pity of it is that Catalan nationalism was ever allowed to become a weapon in the republican armoury.

Since the establishment of the republican regime the question has often been asked whether King Alfonso would not have done better to have remained in Spain and fought for his throne. The vast majority of his subjects had no desire to abolish the monarchy, and there seems to be no doubt that a large section of the army would have rallied to him. All this is true, but to censure him for not making a stand is to ignore the circumstances in which he was placed. It was clearly quite useless to expect any support from the ministers, who were either paralyzed with fright or already making terms with the victorious republicans. The growing isolation of recent years had cut the King off from contact with those who might have saved the situation, and at the supreme moment of his fate the monarch found himself alone. The only counsellor still at the Royal elbow was the Conde de Romanones, and his advice was immediate flight. There is, however, also the character of the King himself to be taken into account in any estimate of what should have been done on this occasion. The proverbial "whiff of grapeshot," or rather its modern equivalent, might well have settled the business, but Don Alfonso is not the man to sit on a throne of which the steps are awash with blood. He has always resolutely set his face against the shooting of Spaniards, unlike the regime which succeeded him, and though he may have been wrong in this particular instance, it is impossible not to respect his motives. His peaceful departure has thrown

the odium for the subsequent disorders upon his successors in office, and that will be remembered to the credit of the monarchy when the time comes for its restoration.

If ever a regime came into being with everything in its favour, that regime was the Second Spanish Republic. It is true that when, after the fall of the First Republic, Castelar had been asked what he would do in the event of a second coming into existence, he had tersely replied, "Emigrate," but the public memory is short in these latter days, and the disastrous period that followed the previous exile of the Bourbons had been completely forgotten. The Spaniard is by nature a pessimist, but on those rare occasions when he does allow himself to indulge in optimism he becomes very optimistic indeed, and so it was in April, 1931. The urban population, in all countries and in all ages more easily led astray by false prophets than the peasantry, had become persuaded that once the throne had disappeared all would be for the best in the best of all possible worlds, and the ease with which the transition was effected was calculated to confirm the Spaniard of the towns in this comfortable belief. In any event, it was spring, and with the enormous wealth of the Royal Family (an article of faith with every revolutionary), and possibly also the wives and daughters of the upper classes, about to be distributed among the people, a future of republican and democratic idleness seemed assured. All this was a welcome relief after the rule of the Directory, with its uncomfortable gospel of *improbis labor* for the greatness of Spain.

A discussion of the state of the Peninsula under the rule of the Second Republic would be out of place here, but it is not irrelevant to enquire whether Spain has gained anything by the fall of the monarchy. The first weakness of the new order to manifest itself was the utter lack of capable leaders. The revolution brought no fresh talent

into public life, and the most prominent statesman of the regime has been Senor Azaña. This individual was originally a cadet at the Military Academy at Segovia, from which he was expelled for certain vicious practices which in this polite age cannot well be described in print. In consequence, he was obliged to follow an obscure career in a government office, and this has soured his outlook to such an extent that he has become a very definite misanthrope. The standpoint of the new rulers of Spain has proved to be as antiquated as they are themselves, for their ideas are those of 1848. They believe in a political cure for economic ills, and they were not long in showing their breadth of mind by initiating an attack on the Church in the most approved manner of French anti-clericalism, and by encouraging the sale of pornographic literature of the most nauseating type. Professors and other so-called intellectuals swarmed into all the best-paid posts, and the common bond between them was the fixed belief that the body politic of Spain existed solely for the purpose of their experiments. The absence of real statesmen, which has been the weakness of the country for so long, has certainly not been remedied by the Second Republic.

Such being the case, it is hardly surprising that the advent of the republican regime should have inaugurated a period in which authority of every kind has come to be regarded with increasing contempt. The triumphant republicans, indeed, were actuated by no other desire than to enjoy the sweets of office, and at first there was an ominous calm, while the extreme Left made its preparations for the next step. In so far as the monarchy had been overthrown, and had not merely collapsed, its fall had been due to a coalition of republicans, Socialists, and Catalan separatists. Once the republic was an established fact, the price claimed by the last of these ill-assorted allies had to be paid, and after a good deal of wrangling Catalonia became a

Generalitat—that is to say, a more or less autonomous body with a status somewhere between that of a colony, with an unofficial majority in the legislature, and a dominion. Meanwhile, the more the Socialists and the republicans saw of one another the less they liked each other, and although the Right remained quiescent, they felt their position too insecure to admit of the luxury of an open quarrel. Accordingly, it was decided to do nothing until the Constituent Cortes had been elected, as inaction appeared to be the only policy that would not wreck the alliance upon which the regime rested. In the interval the press of Europe, and particularly that of Great Britain, extolled the immaculate new order in the Peninsula, and those who ventured to criticize it in any way were denounced as the blackest of reactionaries.

The extremists, however—that is to say, the Communists, anarchists, and syndicalists—had not assisted to overthrow King Alfonso merely to put President Alcalá Zamora¹ in his place, and having got rid of the monarchy, they turned against the other great bulwark of civilization in the country—namely, the Church. In May, 1931, the storm broke, and all over Spain convents and churches were sacked and burnt; while the police, obedient to the orders of the government, made no attempt to interfere. In many districts the inhabitants, once they realized that those who were nominally responsible for the preservation of law and order intended to do nothing, banded themselves together in defence of the clergy and of their property, and thus put a stop to the perpetration of fresh excesses: elsewhere the outrages only ceased when there were no more religious buildings to be gutted. It may be

¹ This gentleman refused to be Prime Minister on the ground that he did not approve of the anti-clerical tendencies of the regime, but his scruples did not prevent him from accepting the Presidency.

remarked, as evidence of the complicity of the authorities in this disgraceful business, that those responsible for the atrocities in question have never been brought to justice, although their identity is no secret either to the public or to the police. The attitude of the ministers on this occasion initiated that alienation of the moderate elements from the new regime which would almost certainly have brought it to an early end had it not been for the ill-advised *pronunciamiento* of General Sanjurjo in August, 1932, which temporarily closed the republican ranks once more. The events of May, 1931, proved that the real rulers of the Second Republic were to be found much further to the Left than had previously appeared to be the case, and when the elections were held they confirmed the fact. They were quite shamelessly "made," and the Constituent Cortes consequently represented, not the Spanish people, but the minority which had brought about the fall of the monarchy.

It is commonly assumed abroad that in Spain the cause of throne and altar was regarded as the same, and it has been the misfortune of both that while their opponents hold this view, their defenders do not. The attitude of the Church towards the King in the last days of the monarchy was equivocal, to say the least of it, and a great number of the secular clergy supported the republicans. There were several reasons for this, not least among them being the feeling that General Primo de Rivera had unduly favoured the regulars, but the result was that it enabled the Left successfully to carry out a policy of *divide et impera*. There are, in effect, two motives behind the attack on the Spanish Church: one is the desire to strike down Christianity in any form, and the other is the Bolshevik determination to abolish all private property. The Church is being attacked, not because it is Catholic, but because it is Christian, and the attitude of the republican regime to-

wards it cannot be defended on any other grounds save those of pure Bolshevism. The case of the expelled Order of Jesus illustrates the actual position very well indeed. The Jesuits had six centres of higher or university studies; twenty secondary schools or colleges, of which fifteen were boarding schools; two observatories, at Tortosa and Granada; and a leper colony at Fontilles: there were also ten seminaries. These establishments were kept up by voluntary contributions, which have naturally now ceased, so that all the State has gained, on the material side, has been the acquisition of a number of buildings which it certainly cannot afford to utilize properly. Of course, what the authorities desire is not merely the possession of bricks and mortar, but the complete control of education, which they will thus be able to direct into anti-Christian channels, as in Russia. More children are receiving their education in the religious, than in the State, schools, and to secularize the whole educational system of Spain would necessitate the expenditure of some sixty millions, whereas the government has at its disposal only twenty-eight. The motives for the attack on the Church must clearly be sought elsewhere than in a new-found zeal for education.

It might have been thought that King Alfonso's peaceful departure from the country would have induced the republic to treat the monarch generously so far as his property was concerned, but the very opposite has proved to be the case. The new government, after a ludicrous trial of the absent sovereign, confiscated everything belonging to the Royal Family upon which it could lay its hands, and thus adopted the policy that Louis Napoleon followed with regard to the House of Orléans, a policy which, when it was inaugurated, gave rise to the witticism, "*C'est le premier vol de l'aigle.*"¹ Much of King Alfonso's property

¹ Cf. René Arnaud: *The Second Republic and Napoleon III*, p. 68.

was immediately sold, and the sales were so arranged that the friends of the new masters of Spain were enabled to purchase what they wanted at a remarkably low price. Incidentally, the confiscation of the King's possessions in the Peninsula has reduced him to a state not far removed from penury, thus proving that the vast fortune which he was stated to have invested abroad was a complete myth. The spectacle of the Royal Family very modestly housed in an hotel at Fontainebleau cannot be explained away by their detractors.

The more effectively to secure themselves against the Right, the triumphant revolutionaries enacted the Law for the Defence of the Republic, which, *inter alia*, made all monarchist propaganda illegal. In theory, of course, it should also have curtailed the activities of the extreme Left, but it has never been effectively put into operation where they were concerned. By this means the Royalists were wholly excluded from the Constituent Cortes, and their principal newspaper, the *A.B.C.*, has been, like the Catholic *El Debate*, repeatedly suspended, often for weeks at a time. In effect, the old dreary drama of liberty being repressed in the name of liberty has been re-enacted in Spain ever since the advent of the republic. Foreigners have been too inclined to take the Constitution at its face value as a modern and enlightened document, and have not studied its application. It provides that no Spanish citizen shall be forced to change his place of residence, and yet the Cardinal Primate was hounded across the frontier for a few phrases in a pastoral. It decrees that in no case shall property be confiscated for political reasons, and yet that of the King, the Grandees, and the Jesuits has been seized wholesale. It lays down that Spanish citizens shall not be indefinitely kept in prison without being brought to trial, and yet numbers of people have been incarcerated for months on the vaguest of charges. It has

always been the great weakness of Spanish politics that the letter of successive Constitutions has been one thing, and the spirit in which they have been worked quite another, but never has there been such a gulf between fact and theory as since the advent of the Second Republic.

The republic settled nothing, and it unsettled much. During the year 1931 the total savings fell by no less a sum than £28,000,000; while the extent to which the land is going out of cultivation is shown by the fact that during the same period there was a decline of 25 per cent. in the sale of superphosphates. When the revolution took place the municipality of Madrid had a balance to its credit of Ptas. 70,000,000, but after a year of republican control it was forced to ask the Cortes for a subsidy of Ptas. 8,000,000. Then, again, the committee for building the university city outside the capital, in which King Alfonso took so great a personal interest, had Ptas. 96,000,000 in its coffers when the monarchy fell, but twelve months later there was not a centimo in them. Beggars once more began to swarm in the streets, and the filth and squalor, which had been banished for many years, began to make their reappearance.

Such being the case, it was not surprising that in the spring of 1932 a definite reaction against the new order began to make itself felt. The moderate elements became alarmed at the steady drift to the Left, the Church realized that the time had come to make a stand, and the monarchists once more took heart. On the other hand, the republicans were every day becoming more divided. Azaña and Lerroux were in open conflict, the Socialists never lost an opportunity of humiliating the administration, which was dependent upon them, and the Communists were avowedly preparing to seize power. In the opinion of the most competent observers the republic, in the summer of 1932, had but six months of troubled existence before it,

after which a restoration of the monarchy was generally considered to be inevitable. This was the moment chosen by General Sanjurjo for his ill-advised *pronunciamiento*, which not only brought together in self-defence all the elements of the Left, but provided Azaña with an excuse for conducting a campaign of persecution against all those who disagreed with him.¹

The moment that the government was informed of General Sanjurjo's action everyone whose loyalty to the regime was in any way in question was at once put into prison, and the conditions in which these so-called suspects were incarcerated were a disgrace to a civilized nation. In Madrid they were herded in verminous cells, four or five in each, and they were compelled to use the one bed in turn. At Guadalajara their lot was even worse, for in the prison there they were obliged to set watches at night against the enormous rats which then made their appearance. Similar instances could be quoted from other parts of Spain, for everywhere the republican officials availed themselves to the full of this opportunity of torturing their opponents in mind and body, thereby, incidentally, proving once more that sadism and political extremism are inseparable. Imprisonment, however, was not the worst that the opponents of the republic had to face, for there was also the danger of being murdered in their place of confinement. One example will suffice to show the official attitude. The head of a noble Basque family, who was detained on suspicion in the Town Hall of Irun for the night of August 10th, 1932, was informed by the woman who brought him his meals that pressure was being put upon her to poison his food.

It will not be out of place to cite a few instances of the methods employed by the republican police. The Conde

¹ Cf. the criticism of the republican Professor Unamuno as reported in the *Daily Telegraph* of November 30th, 1932.

de los Villares, who was arrested in the sleeping-car between San Sebastian and Madrid merely for criticizing the administration, was imprisoned in the same cell as a madman, and lost his reason in consequence. A typical case was that of the Marqués de Manzanedo, the chairman of the National Association, a body of Fascist tendencies. One day the porter at the offices of this organization took in a parcel, which had been left by an unknown messenger: within an hour the police arrived, found the parcel, which they had themselves sent, to contain sixteen revolvers, and the Marqués de Manzanedo was put into prison, where he remained for weeks without trial. The Duque de Medina Celi was arrested on the evidence of a dismissed servant in the most approved French revolutionary style. Nor were those who did not belong to the hated aristocracy any better treated. One of the most prominent citizens of Cadiz was deported because he was heard to say that the old Spanish flag had a national significance, because it was common to all Spaniards, whereas the new one was not. A Benedictine monk was fined Ptas. 500 for having inserted in a parcel, subsequently opened by the authorities, a slip of paper imploring the addressee to "pray for poor Spain distracted by sectarianism." *De minimis non curat lex* is not a maxim of the Second Republic.

As if these barbarities were not enough, the government decided to deport a number of its opponents to Africa. A mere handful of these had ever been tried, and the vast majority were merely under arrest as "undesirable suspects." The place of exile, Villa Cisneros, was clearly selected in the hope that most of the deportees would never live to return to the Peninsula. It is a desolate spot on the edge of the Sahara, and to such an extent are the bare necessities of life lacking that all water has to be brought in tanks from the Canary Islands. Had the deportees been

drawn from a class accustomed to physical hardship, this would have been bad enough, but they were mostly members of the aristocracy, and however much they may have deserved their fate on account of their cowardice in the last days of the monarchy, this in no way excuses the barbarous treatment meted out to them by the republican authorities.

No refinement of cruelty was spared by the government. The boat which was used for the conveyance of the unhappy monarchists was the *España No. 5*, a German cargo boat that had been confiscated during the war, and had lately been used in the cattle trade. The prisoners were compelled to carry their own trunks on board, and the type of accommodation provided can be gauged from the fact that the bunks were a mere 60 centimetres apart, while for mattresses there were canvas sacks stuffed with straw. No glasses were supplied for drinking purposes, and the deportees had to drink out of washing-jugs; and the general conditions on the ship were so bad that the cats had been devoured by the rats even before she left harbour. All this, it may be observed, was in marked contrast with the treatment which had been meted out to the extremists of the Left earlier in the year. On that occasion a number of Communist gunmen, drawn from the very dregs of the population and mostly guilty of murder, had been deported for a short time to Spanish Guinea. They were sent, not in a cattle boat, but in the liner *Buenos Aires*, and before their departure the ship was visited by the chairman of the Compañía Transatlántica, who ordered extra comforts. This difference in treatment is eloquent of the mentality and policy of the new rulers of Spain.

Enough has been said to show that Spain has gained nothing, and has lost much, by the fall of the monarchy. She has sunk in the esteem of the world to the level of the

most insignificant South American republic. At home, the whole fabric of civilization has been deliberately undermined, and with the most disastrous consequences to every section of the population. The sole gainers by the change of regime have been a small clique, who are enriching themselves with the plunder of the Crown, the Church, and the landowners.

Meanwhile, the Royal Family has been quietly residing at Fontainebleau, and has carefully refrained from all political activities; indeed, when General Sanjurjo's revolt took place the King was in Central Europe. Shortly after the revolution Don Jaime, the Carlist claimant, died, and as he had no children, the only heir of the first Don Carlos is now his uncle, Don Alfonso de Borbon y Este, who was born so long ago as 1849. On the death of this prince, who is childless, the legitimate monarch of Spain will be King Alfonso XIII, and the century-old feud between the two branches of the House of Bourbon will be at an end, to the corresponding advantage of the monarchist cause. That is to say, that in the future the Spanish throne will rest upon the sure basis of legitimism, and the King will not owe his crown either to the people or to their elected representatives. The advantages of such a situation are too obvious to require enumeration.

Chapter VIII

Monarchy in Central Europe

MONARCHY in Central Europe—that is to say, to the east of the Rhine and in the valley of the Danube—has always been somewhat different in its nature from that which has distinguished it in the British Isles, France, Italy, and Spain. Its basis—namely, the representation of the national, as opposed to sectional interests—has been, for the most part, the same, but circumstances have compelled it to safeguard these interests in a manner unknown in the western and southern countries of the European continent. It has been obliged to look for support to certain factors which, with the passage of time, gradually, though imperceptibly, lost their importance, and so when the crisis came the foundations of the various thrones concerned gave way. An observer in 1914 would probably have said that the German, if not the Austrian, monarchy was more firmly rooted than the British, Belgian, or Italian, but to-day there are still Kings in London, Brussels, and Rome, while the throne of Frederick the Great is, at any rate temporarily, unoccupied. The explanation of this is to be found in the contrasted historical development of the dynasties concerned.

In the first place, the Crown was never identified with the nation, as in England and France. The history of Germany can be searched in vain for an analogy to the rise of the Plantagenets and the Capets. The Hohenzollerns may appear to be an exception, but such is not really the case, for they have always been Prussian, rather than German, in their outlook, and they were never prepared to

sink Prussia in the Reich, as the Savoyards were content to allow the absorption of Piedmont in Italy. The German dynasties grew up among the ruins of the Holy Roman Empire, for the titanic struggle between Emperor and Pope begat principalities to the north, as well as to the south, of the Alps. In their struggle to establish the Imperial control over Italy the Hohenstaufen, particularly Frederick II, were compelled to make repeated concessions to the centrifugal influences in Germany, and when they fell it was too late to establish a centralized monarchy on the English or French pattern.¹ Had the *Stupor Mundi* concentrated his attention on Germany rather than on Italy, he might well have done there what Henry II was doing in England and Philip II in France, but he preferred the Mediterranean to the Elbe, and the result of his choice was to postpone even the nominal unity of both Italy and Germany until the second half of the nineteenth century.

The consequence of this was the chaos that has marked German politics from that day to the present. In the place of a national monarchy with its feudatories, such as existed in England and France, there were literally scores of independent princelings, all of whom owed an allegiance, which every day grew more nominal and less real, to the Emperor. In the course of centuries circumstances, and the logical Latin mind of Napoleon I, greatly reduced their number, but by then it was too late to modify the character of German monarchy. Without any national basis, and ruling kingdoms and principalities that had no geographical or economic justification, the various dynasties naturally regarded their position in a different light from their contemporaries in London, Paris, and Madrid. They might ape the fashions of Versailles, even to the extent of maintaining official mistresses for ornament

¹ Cf. Ernst Kantorowicz: *Frederick the Second*, p. 379 et seq.

rather than for use, but the broad national and popular basis upon which the western monarchies rested was quite impossible for them to achieve.

This fact drove them to rely upon military support to an extent unknown to the west of the Rhine, and military they remained. The memoirs of English and French visitors to Germany in the eighteenth, and early nineteenth, century are full of references to the great display of uniforms to be found there, and some of the princelings, like the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, turned their dominions into establishments for the production and supply of mercenaries,¹ which unpopular governments, like the Whig oligarchy in Great Britain, found extremely useful as police in times of crisis. A few of the German dynasties made themselves popular, either because they appealed to the particularist sentiments of those over whom they ruled, or because of the personal qualities of their members, but the principle which they represented aroused no great enthusiasm, and they were regarded as the countryman looks on the squire, not as the subject reverences his sovereign. On the other hand, there was equally no resentment against them, for they were not foreign, like the princes of contemporary Italy, and their shortcomings were those of their fellow-countrymen. Apart from Prussia, the only exception to this state of affairs was to be found in Bavaria, where the Wittelsbachs ruled like the Stuarts; they stood for something more than a *schloss*

¹ They were not, however, so thorough as the Princes of Mingrelia, who "established a stud for the production of young girls, in which this type of goods could be cultivated just as horses are bred in Europe. Good-looking men were coupled with beautiful women, and received a commission on the proceeds of their co-operation." In this eminently democratic country the Princes "also followed this example, and were not ashamed to take part as simple workmen in the activities of their factory." Cf. Essad Bey: *Twelve Secrets of the Caucasus*.

and an army of toy-soldiers, and their reward was the love of their people, which even the events of 1918 did nothing to weaken.

Such was the background against which the new German Empire came into existence in 1871. Unity by general agreement had proved impossible in 1848, and after that failure it was clear that if the problem were to be solved at all it would only be by blood and iron. These methods were ruthlessly employed by Bismarck. Austrian influence in Germany was eradicated at Sadowa, and the treatment of Hanover was a warning to those States that were opposed to the policy of Prussia. The establishment of the German Empire was thus the last stage in the Prussian conquest of Germany, which Napoleon III, quite unmindful, like his uncle, of the true interests of France, had facilitated by his action in 1859 and in 1866. In these circumstances, the Imperial monarchy naturally acted in the interests of Prussia, rather than of the Reich as a whole: in short, in assuming the Imperial crown the Hohenzollerns made no effort to shoulder the Imperial responsibilities, and the Treaty of Versailles was the price which the German people had eventually to pay for a dynasty that denied the principle upon which alone hereditary monarchy can rest. It is impossible to resist the conclusion that it was a bad day for the monarchical cause, for Germany, and for the world, when the Royal House of Prussia displaced the Habsburgs as the main factor in the politics of Central Europe.

From 1871 to 1914 the stock of the Hohenzollerns was undoubtedly priced too high, but since the latter date it has equally certainly been unduly depreciated. The fact is that they were exceedingly able Kings of Prussia, but very indifferent German Emperors, so that while the Prussians would be extremely well-advised to restore them to their ancient throne, a return to the Empire on the old lines

would be a mistake. Their short-sightedness is almost inconceivable, and was only equalled by their readiness to sacrifice all and every sort of principle for some temporary advantage, once the Imperial crown was in their possession. First in Brandenburg, and then in Prussia, the Hohenzollerns, for generation after generation, pursued a consistent, patriotic, and truly monarchical policy, but as soon as the new dignity was theirs a frank opportunism became the order of the day. The German Empire, under their direction, reeled about like a man in his cups, and it was, as much as anything else, the uncertainty as to the course which would be pursued that precipitated the late war.

One of the first acts of the new Empire was to intrigue with Thiers and Gambetta to prevent the restoration of the monarchy in France, and one of the last was to send Lenin and Trotsky to fan the flames of revolution in Russia. This reckless disregard of the principles upon which their throne was based was displayed by the Imperial Hohenzollerns in their attitude towards every problem that confronted them, and their ministers were no wiser than themselves. Bismarck, whose reputation seems, extraordinarily enough, to have suffered nothing from the collapse of everything for which he stood, was a case of a man who for twenty years controlled the destiny of Europe without at any time possessing a European outlook. Compared with Metternich, he is as a dwarf beside a giant. Bismarck was a Prussian first and foremost, and it never occurred to him that the line of conduct which was suited to the interests of Prussia might be contrary to those of the German Empire. Cavour confounded Piedmont in Italy, but Bismarck confounded Prussia with Germany, and the result has been that the work of the one has survived, while that of the other is in ruins.

The consequence has been that the establishment of the German Empire introduced a new disturbing factor into

the world. The Napoleonic regime had been bad enough in this respect, but as it was founded by an adventurer, little could in any case be expected of it. The German Emperor, on the other hand, was a legitimate monarch, and he was surrounded by counsellors who were supposed to be convinced monarchists, so there was the less excuse for what followed. The reason for this paradox was that in achieving the Imperial dignity the Hohenzollerns had been compelled to deny the principles upon which their position in Prussia was based, and their appetite grew for that upon which it had been fed. William I became German Emperor over the dead body of Hanover, and having sacrificed one monarch to their ambition the Hohenzollerns naturally did not hesitate to apply the same methods elsewhere. Like the British newspaper proprietors mentioned on an earlier page, they industriously set to work sawing off the branch on which they were themselves seated, and when the crash came it unfortunately involved other dynasties, such as the Wittelsbachs, which had remained true to the old traditions of monarchy. Never was the truth of the old adage, *corruptio optimi pessima*, better illustrated than by the career of the Prussian Royal House once it had become Imperial.

At the same time, it must be admitted that William I possessed an appreciation of his situation that was denied to Bismarck. The old Emperor was never quite happy about the support which the Iron Chancellor insisted on giving to the French republicans, for he was a legitimist at heart, and it required all the sophistries of the minister, combined with the traditional jealousy felt by the Hohenzollerns for the Bourbons, to reconcile him to it. William I also had the wisdom to realize that the Imperial crown might prove more of a curse than of a blessing, and he was extremely reluctant to assume it. The creation of Prussia had been the work of the Hohenzollerns, and they were

admirably suited to rule a kingdom of that nature. Bismarck made Emperors of them, and from the start they were quite unfitted to bear the burden which was imposed upon them. The Imperial outlook cannot be acquired in five minutes, as was shown in Great Britain, where it was not until the Guelphs had been on the throne for over a century, and for four generations, that they rose to the height of their opportunities. As German Emperors, the Hohenzollerns were always *nouveaux riches*, and time to evolve a truly Imperial consciousness was denied them.

William I made no change in his behaviour after he became German Emperor, and his undoubted popularity among his subjects was very largely due to his unaffected simplicity. In many ways his position resembled that of Marshal von Hindenburg to-day, and his whole outlook upon life was very different from that of his grandson. In private he was the typical *bourgeois*, as the following story well illustrates. A member of his household had occasion to see the Emperor one evening immediately after dinner, and asked the valet to announce him to his master. The servant asked the official to wait for a few minutes, as the Emperor was changing his clothes. To the comment that it was surely unusual for him to be doing so at that hour, the valet somewhat indignantly replied: "Do you imagine that he would go to the theatre in his new dinner trousers? It would not be like our old gentleman to be so extravagant."¹

In spite of his age and of his peculiarities, William I (and in this he was aided by Bismarck) never allowed the military party and the Junkers to dictate German policy as they have done since the fall of the monarchy. The meteoric rise of Prussia in the middle of the nineteenth century not only created a new vested interest of soldiers

¹ Baron von Reischach: *Under Three Emperors*, p. 68.

and administrators, but it blinded these latter to the limits beyond which they could not go. William II held them back, but, in the last resort, he was not strong enough to control them, and the result was the late war. The events of the last few years show that they have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing, and now that there is no monarch to control their activities the Prussian oligarchs, disguised as Nazis, are carrying matters with an even higher hand than of yore. Had there been a King in Prussia on the morrow of their defeat he could have taken advantage of what had happened to repress them, but the Socialists proved such bad rulers that the country has turned to the Junkers once again. This oligarchical rule was *in posse* during the reign of William I, but he took care never to allow the oligarchs their head, and thus showed that, whatever his failings in other directions might be, he knew where lay his duty as a hereditary monarch.

The brief reign of his son and successor, Frederick III, has furnished material for many speculations as to what would have happened had it been prolonged to the normal length, but from the historical standpoint it is only of importance in that it served to strengthen the determination of the Crown Prince to reverse his father's policy in every respect. In fact, the contrast between the two men was complete, physically as well as intellectually, and the moderation of Frederick was as repugnant to William as was the latter's disabled arm, for which he blamed his mother. It is also not without interest to note that when there was a prospect of war with France at the time of the Boulanger *affaire*, Frederick, then Crown Prince, said that in case hostilities should break out, "The Fatherland will see me where I belong, at the head of one of the armies. I know that I shall not be able to stand the hardships of the campaign longer than about a fortnight, but it will make a good impression on the troops if the Prince Imperial

should die in camp at the head of his army."¹ That was not the line adopted by his son in November, 1918. From this time, too, date the open quarrels in the Hohenzollern family which have cast so much discredit upon it, and which culminated in the scandal of the marriage of the sister of the Emperor William II with a dish-washer of disreputable antecedents. Frederick III was the only member of the dynasty who had it in him to make a satisfactory German Emperor, and whether or not he would have fulfilled the expectations which had been formed of him, his death ushered in a period which can only be described as that of the twilight of monarchy in Central Europe.

It is difficult to arrive at a true estimate of William II. Although he is still alive he belongs to history, but to such recent history that all the evidence necessary for a final judgment is not available. As one volume of memoirs succeeds another the balance, in the minds of all honest men, dips first to one side and then to the other, but it is quite impossible to say yet whether the credit or the debit side of the Emperor's account contains the greater number of entries. To arrive at even an approximately just estimate of his character it is first of all necessary to allow the Byzantine flattery which was lavished upon him, by no means only in his own country, in his earlier days to cancel out the ridiculous campaign of abuse to which he was subject during the period of the war. That the Kaiser is neither an angel from heaven nor a devil from hell is now, one would imagine, finally established, but between these two extremes it is by no means easy to decide where to place him.

Perhaps the shrewdest judgment ever passed upon him was that of the Emperor Francis Joseph, who said, "*Wenn nur der deutsche Kaiser schweigen könnte! Er spricht zu viel, zu oft. Es ist besser, dass wir schweigen und lassen*

¹ Baron von Reischach: *Under Three Emperors*, p. 115.

unsere Minister reden."¹ His temperament is that of the artist, rather than that of the statesman, and knowing that his nature was more akin to that of Hamlet than to that of Cæsar, he was inclined to make up in words for what he lacked in deeds. There can also be little doubt that throughout his reign the Emperor believed that he had a definite mission to perform. "All his real self," a recent German writer has observed, "was not contained in his boastful phrases and threatening gestures, as foreign critics believe; but, instead, he was under the delusion of being the instrument of Providence, a saviour of the whole world."² In effect, his imagination controlled, and appears still to control, his judgment, with the result that his policy was vacillating, and there were continual complaints that no reliance could be placed upon him. It may even be that the Kaiser knew, in his own heart, that he was not the mighty Emperor Rex that Europe believed him to be, and that he over-acted the part in an effort to convince himself and others that he really was what he seemed. At any rate, this explanation is suggested by the attitude which he adopted on more than one occasion.

In his defence it must be admitted that he was wretchedly served by his ministers. Hohenlohe and Bülow are condemned out of their own mouths, and the other Chancellors were mere clerks, though more efficient ones than those who have held the office since the fall of the monarchy. The Germans are a great people, but, like the Spaniards, they lack the qualities essential for the production of statesmen. Now and again a man of the first rank,³ a Bismarck or a Stresemann, makes his appearance,

¹ Count Julius Andrassy: *Bismarck, Andrassy, and their Successors*, p. 291.

² Otto Hamman: *The World Policy of Germany, 1890-1912*, p. 165.

³ Relative to other German statesmen, that is to say.

but there is no regular supply of able men, and the second-raters are far inferior to their equivalents in Great Britain, France, and Italy. The reign of William II was no exception to this rule, and what was lacking in the monarch was not supplied by the ministers. Holstein and Eulenberg exercised far too much influence, and the old maxims of Bismarck were ignored. In particular, the Iron Chancellor's policy of defending the German colonies on the battlefields of Europe was abandoned in favour of the creation of a navy, which alienated Great Britain; while Russia was allowed to drift into the French orbit, and Germany was faced with the strategist's nightmare of a war on two fronts. Finally, when hostilities did come, the ministers and generals, on whose demand every other interest had been sacrificed to the military, proved so incompetent that the war was lost. Like his subjects, the Emperor was the victim of the failure of the national character to produce statesmen.

All this, however, does not excuse, or even mitigate, the conduct of the Kaiser in November, 1918. In showing himself a coward he proved finally that he was quite unworthy of any crown, Imperial or Royal, and in following his father's example the Crown Prince also gave conclusive evidence of his unfitness to succeed to one. Whether, at that supreme hour of his country's fate, the Emperor should have sought death on the battlefield, or should have returned to Berlin to organize the national resistance to the victorious Allies, is a moot point, but the flight into Holland cannot be defended upon any ground. It has made the name of William II stink in the nostrils of every honest man, however sincerely monarchist his convictions.

The Kaiser's behaviour had the most disastrous consequences, and it definitely discredited the monarchical principle, of which he had for years been considered the pre-eminent example. The collapse of the Imperial throne

was not, for the reasons given above, a matter of much regret, but the tragedy was that the craven conduct of the Hohenzollerns made the position of the other German dynasties impossible. The news that the All Highest was on the run so disheartened the monarchists everywhere that within the space of a few days there was not a throne left in the Reich, though subsequent events have shown that in the great majority of cases the republics which made their appearance were by no means wanted. In particular, the flight of the Emperor entailed the dethronement of the Wittelsbachs, who thus found themselves for the second time the victims of the Prussian Royal House, the previous occasion being when they were cheated of their proper rank in the new German Empire in 1871. While the Crown Prince of Bavaria was leading home his defeated troops from France and Belgium in a manner befitting the soldier and gentleman he has always proved himself to be, the Emperor's cowardice emboldened a handful of revolutionaries to execute a *coup de main* at Munich, and his fate was that of the other dynasts. If the Royal and Princely Families of Germany ever again link their destinies with those of the Hohenzollerns they will show a lack of foresight unique in history.

What followed proved the bankruptcy of the statesmanship of the Allies. Prussia had made the German Empire, and the latter had made the war. At the end of 1918 Prussia had been fairly and squarely beaten to her knees; the German Empire was in ruins; and the German Emperor was a fugitive. Such being the case, there was an excellent opportunity of undoing the work of 1866 and 1870, and without perpetrating any injustice upon the German people to remove for ever the menace of a German Empire dominated by Prussia. South Germany and the Rhineland were only too ready to shake off the Prussian yoke, and it would not have required much effort to have

brought about such a settlement of German internal affairs as would have ensured the security of Europe for the rest of the century. One word would have restored the Wittelsbachs to their throne, and this would have provided a nucleus round which all South Germany would indubitably have rallied. The Prussians would have been restricted to their own territory, and so rendered powerless for harm.¹

Instead, the Allies proceeded to pile Ossa on Pelion in the matter of blunders. The war had been fought to make the world safe for democracy, so President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George could have nothing to do with monarchs, even if the latter were to help to achieve the end for which millions had died. M. Clemenceau was at least a realist, but his Jacobin upbringing, combined with the Masonic influences to which he was subject, blinded him to the advantages which would accrue from the existence of a Catholic and Conservative kingdom in South Germany. France has indeed paid dear for her abandonment of the traditional monarchy. Had there been no *Trois Glorieuses* she would have had the left bank of the Rhine as her frontier in the thirties: had Henry V been on the throne in the fifties and sixties there would have been neither a united Germany nor a united Italy: and had the monarchy been restored by the time of the Armistice, there would have been a settlement that would finally have disposed of the Prussian menace. President Wilson, Mr. Lloyd George, and Signor Orlando were probably quite unaware that there was any difference between a Bavarian and a Prussian, but M. Clemenceau knew, and he therefore sinned against the light.

The result of the Treaty of Versailles has been to make Prussia the master of Germany as never before. The institution of republicanism has, as might have been fore-

¹ Cf. J. D. Gregory in *The English Review*, vol. liii, pp. 672-678.

told, been fraught with disaster both for Germany and for Europe. First of all, it led to a Socialist regime, which squandered the national resources with results that were felt far beyond the German frontier, and now the reaction from this has installed in office a party which seems determined that its little finger shall prove thicker than the Junker's loin. Whether the Nazi movement will prove to be, like Fascism, a permanent force in Europe, or merely ephemeral, like Anabaptism, remains to be seen, but its policy is the reverse of everything for which true monarchy stands. Racial intolerance, as exemplified in the treatment of the Jews, is quite alien to the monarchist tradition, and in these circumstances it is not surprising that Hitler has set his face against a restoration. Indeed, it is to be hoped that the monarchy will not be restored under present Nazi auspices, for it could only be an even greater travesty of the real thing than the Hohenzollern Empire of pre-war days. Far better let the Kings bide their time until Hitlerism either sheds its undesirable elements, or comes crashing to the ground. When that time arrives the best settlement will be for the individual States to restore their rightful rulers, and for the Empire itself to have an elective head chosen by the German sovereigns from among themselves. This would satisfy all the real needs of Germany, without constituting a threat to the rest of Europe. The sooner the German people forget the Hohenzollern Empire the better.

If association with the Imperial Hohenzollerns has proved most damaging to the other dynasties in the Reich, it has been quite fatal to the Habsburgs. Indeed, one might well push the argument even further, and say that Germany itself was a very definite loser when the control of German-speaking Europe passed from Vienna to Berlin. What permanent benefits that country received in consequence of the work of Bismarck it is impossible to see, for

she lost her soul,¹ and she went down to one of the greatest defeats in human history. As if that were not enough, she dragged the Habsburg monarchy down with her, and so precipitated a state of chaos in the whole of the Danube area which has defied every attempt to bring it to an end. It is quite beside the point to assert that had Bismarck's policy been followed by his successors the catastrophe would never have occurred. He deliberately placed the German Empire in a position where it could not possibly remain, and that was surely proof, not of statesmanship, but of folly. In effect, German predominance in Europe depended upon the continuance of an order which that very predominance itself necessarily upset. Had Bismarck been of the stature that his admirers claim, he would have foreseen this; he did not foresee it, and such is the measure of his incompetence.

It is fashionable in this present age to sneer at the Habsburgs, just as previous to the late war English journalists, whose social standing or connections barred them from the more exclusive circles in Vienna, never wearied of declaring that the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was a veritable blot upon the map of Europe. Doubtless one of the problems that will most intrigue that overworked individual, the historian of the future, will be to account for the support invariably given by the British press, more particularly that section of it which is Conservative in domestic politics, to revolutionary movements on the European mainland. The true explanation is to be found in the type of individual that is now chosen to represent it abroad. Gone are the days when the representatives of the great London newspapers, cultured men of the world, were treated almost as ambassadors in the capitals where they resided, for in their place have come reporters, whose edu-

¹ "The uprooting of the German mind for the benefit of the German Empire." F. Nietzsche: *Thoughts Out of Season*.

cation and breeding only too often confine their acquaintance to the riff-raff of the Left. The news they send home is coloured, partly by their associates in the second-rate cafés and bars which they frequent, and partly by their resentment¹ at their exclusion from good society, with the most disastrous consequences to the peace of the world. Naturally there are exceptions, but it is undeniable that the foreign correspondents of the British press are not of the standing or class that they were fifty years ago.

These gentry never ceased to vilify the Habsburg monarchy, with the result that an atmosphere intensely hostile to it was created even among those who should have known better. It was accepted as an axiom that the moment the Emperor Francis Joseph died the Austro-Hungarian Empire would break up, and the fact that this did not occur made not the slightest difference, so firmly rooted was the conviction that the Empire was an unnatural institution. So, when the opportunity occurred, it was parcelled out by President Wilson, M. Clemenceau, Mr. Lloyd George, and Signor Orlando without a voice being raised in favour of the dynasty that for nearly seven hundred years had been the bulwark of civilization in the countries watered by the Danube. Two of these gentlemen are in their graves, but two are still alive, and it is to be hoped that when they, and the publicists who encouraged them, survey the condition of the Succession States at the present time, they are proud of their handiwork. *Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*

With all their faults, and it would be idle to deny that they had their share of human failings, the Habsburgs possessed that Imperial outlook to which their Hohenzollern rivals never attained. Charles V spent his whole life in endeavouring to preserve the unity of Europe² in an age when the centrifugal influences were growing stronger

¹ Or that of their wives and mistresses.

² Cf. D. B. Wyndham Lewis: *Emperor of the West, passim.*

every day, and although he failed in the task his example was not lost upon his successors. In the seventeenth century the narrow-minded provincialism of some of the German sovereigns loosed upon their country the horrors of the Thirty Years' War, and Germany became the battleground of the French and the Swedes, whose aid was invoked by the enemies of the Empire and of the Emperor. It is impossible to apportion exactly the responsibility for this catastrophe, but the whole blame cannot be laid at the door of the Habsburgs, as has so often been attempted by historians. When all is said and done, they were actuated by a desire to maintain European unity, and their justification is surely to be found in the misuse which their opponents, notably Prussia, made of their victory when the Habsburg writ no longer ran in the Reich.

Probably one reason why the work of the Habsburgs has been so unjustly depreciated is that few picturesque or romantic figures are to be found among the members of the dynasty, at any rate until the end of the nineteenth century, with the exception of Maria Theresa. Yet, slowly but surely, Emperor after Emperor spread the influence of civilization over vast areas that had never known it before, and as the tide of Ottoman invasion was rolled back one province after another was rescued from Asia, and incorporated in the general body of traditional European culture. Right up to the outbreak of the late war this process continued, and the mark of Vienna is clear for all men to see in Bosnia and Herzegovina, though it has to some extent been eradicated by the subsequent period of Jugo-Slav misrule. There may have been few outstanding personalities in the Imperial House, but there was continuity of policy in the administration, which was far more important, and as the two-headed eagle gradually replaced the Crescent in South-East Europe humanity was very definitely the gainer.

It was the misfortune of the Habsburgs that circumstances made them the object of attack when the French Revolution spread the virus of nationalism and democracy throughout Europe. Their rule was not based upon either of the principles that had suddenly become fashionable, and so any disorder among their subjects, whatever the cause, became the action of nations rightly struggling to be free. The course of events in Italy, in particular, during the fifty years which followed the Treaty of Vienna created a strong prejudice against Austrian rule in many parts of the world. In actual fact the Austrian occupation of Italy was dictated by military necessity, for if the Austrians had not garrisoned the peninsula the French would assuredly have done so, and thus the flank of the hereditary dominions of the Habsburgs would have been exposed. Strange as it may at first sight appear, the unification of Italy under the House of Savoy should have been a definite advantage to Austria, even though it meant the sacrifice of Venetia and Lombardy, for it closed the road to Vienna to the French, and rendered impossible any repetition of the strategy that had forced Francis II to sign the Treaty of Campo Formio in 1797. Unhappily, the memory of old wrongs was too strong to allow either party to see where its true interest lay, but when the Habsburgs enjoy their own again they will find that a powerful Italy is their strongest support.

The greatness of a dynasty can to no inconsiderable extent be gauged by the quality of the men who serve it, and judged by this standard the Habsburgs rank very high indeed, for they had Metternich as their minister.¹ In this connection it may well be pointed out that this remarkable man did not originate a policy, but rather applied the old

¹ Since the publication of Mr. Algernon Cecil's admirable biography there is no excuse for ignorance with regard to the career and policy of Metternich.

principles of Habsburg rule to the problems by which he was confronted. Such being the case, the original praise must go to the Imperial House that had conceived the policy, though this in no way detracts from the credit of the statesman who showed himself so skilful in its application. Metternich could never have served the *parvenu* Hohenzollern Empire, and if he failed in the end it was not, as his contemporaries imagined, because he was behind the times, but rather because he was in advance of them. What would the Europe of to-day, weary of nationalism and democracy, not give for the blessing of security which Metternich offered it, but which it so foolishly rejected? Yet the terms upon which he offered it are the only ones upon which it can ever be established.

Metternich shared to the full the traditional Habsburg belief in the unity of Europe, but he realized that if that unity were to be anything more than a fiction it must rest upon a new basis. Down to the date of the Treaty of Westphalia the assumption had been that if Europe was to be united it must be under the ægis of the Habsburgs as Holy Roman Emperors, and heirs of the Cæsars. This was the view of Charles V, but even he was unable to carry it wholly into effect, and his successors completely failed to do so before the opposition of France. Louis XIV endeavoured to achieve the unity of Europe under the French hegemony, and for a time he succeeded, but in the end the Bourbons failed as the Habsburgs had done before them. Napoleon tried to bend the bow of Charles V and Louis XIV, but he attempted to include the dominions of the Czar in Europe, and his plans were buried in the Russian snows. The lesson, then, of three centuries of European history, from the accession of Charles V to the final overthrow of Napoleon, was that the unity of the continent could not be maintained on the basis of the acknowledged predominance of one Power over the others.

Metternich grasped this fact, and in place of the supremacy of one State he worked for common action by all. This was the idea behind the Holy Alliance,¹ but the Austrian statesman's policy long survived the demise of that organization. From 1815 until 1848 the mainspring of politics in Central Europe was to be found in Vienna, and European interests were never sacrificed for the temporary convenience of Austria. From 1870 to 1914 the part played by the Habsburgs in the earlier period was filled by the Hohenzollerns, and hardly a year went by during which the mailed fist of Prussia was not shaken in the face of one or other of the Powers. The difference is that between the point of view of Metternich and that of Bismarck, between the Habsburg and the Hohenzollern conception of Imperial responsibilities. It is true that certain aspects of the policy of the Holy Alliance can hardly be defended, and they brought Canning into violent conflict with it on more than one occasion, but they in no way detract from the greatness of Metternich. He saw that the European Powers had certain common interests that transcended their particular interests, and he realized that unless the latter were subordinated to the former the Continent would soon become the bear-garden to which democracy, nationalism, and republicanism have now reduced it.

The policy of Metternich was inherent in the sovereignty of the Habsburgs, and he but gave the latter the form most suited to the age in which he lived. The catastrophe of his life was that his work did not survive, and it has been left to the present generation to appreciate his merit. First Napoleon III, and then Bismarck, put his sword into the machinery, and the latter was not strong enough to resist their interference. Metternich was also unlucky in the Italian situation, where, as has been shown, the monar-

¹ "It was not particularly holy nor much of an alliance." Algeron Cecil: *Metternich*, p. 144.

chical principle had come to be so largely identified with alien domination. Above all, the rising tide of nationalism was against him, and until the world had indulged in a nationalist debauch, it was in reality idle to expect it to realize how dangerous an overdose of the drug could be. He once¹ expressed the wish that he had been born in 1900, but only the present generation can appreciate how great a tragedy it has been for humanity that this was not the case, for to-day he would have had the wind and tide in his favour, whereas a century ago he was condemned to fight a losing battle.

The Emperor Francis Joseph was the pupil of Metternich, and for good and ill his long reign has left upon Central Europe an influence that will be felt for many years to come. Like all the leading personages of the pre-war period, he has been the object of so much calumny that it is not too easy to arrive at a just estimate of his character, and as he had the misfortune to displease the English Slavophiles his reputation in Great Britain has been blackened accordingly. It was not in his nature to court publicity in the manner of William II, and after the disasters of his early years he played no great part upon the European stage, but in his own dominions he attempted to put into practice that doctrine of the balance which he had learnt from his great mentor. He displayed uncommon shrewdness when he met the demands of Hungary, and it is a matter of regret that he did not adopt the same line with the Czechs, for had he been crowned King of Bohemia at Prague their autonomist movement would never have assumed an anti-dynastic form. It was the same mistake that Queen Victoria made with regard to Ireland, and King Alfonso XIII in respect of Catalonia.

The Emperor proved to the very end of his life that he had not forgotten the teaching of Metternich to avoid

¹ *Mémoires*, vol. iii, p. 369.

extremes, and one of his last acts was to refuse to agree to the establishment of a military dictatorship in Bohemia.¹ Unfortunately, his great age prevented him from being in a condition to exercise his authority at the very time when circumstances rendered it necessary that he should do so if the monarchy were to survive—that is to say, when the Germans and Hungarians were joining hands to upset the balance upon which it depended. The Hohenzollern Empire cared, as has been shown, nothing for the monarchical principle beyond the frontiers of Prussia, and it regarded the Austro-Hungarian Empire merely as a subject State which could supply a contingent of troops to die for the greater glory of the Prussian King. The Slavs were the enemies of Berlin, so Vienna must outlaw them too, irrespective of the fact that the Habsburgs had always numbered millions of Slavs among their most loyal subjects. This policy suited the Magyar book excellently, so an unholy alliance was made between Prussia and Hungary, which undermined the very foundations upon which the Habsburg monarchy rested. The Emperor resisted this tendency with all his ebbing strength, and had he been a younger man he would never have given his consent to the declaration of war against Serbia, though in justice it must be admitted that the attitude of Belgrade was quite indefensible.

The Karageorgevitch throne was established upon the principle of regicide. Had the Serbian Royal House possessed any regard for the sanctity of monarchy it would have realized that the activities of Slav terrorists in the Austro-Hungarian Empire should be discouraged in its own interests. In actual fact, it did not hesitate to encourage abroad that same policy of murder which had paid it so well at home. In May, 1914, a month before the Archduke Francis Ferdinand was murdered at Serajevo, the

¹ Cf. Count Polzer-Hoditz: *The Emperor Karl*, p. 106.

present King of Jugo-Slavia, then Crown Prince of Serbia, visited the State printing-works at Belgrade, and a compositor named Nedeljko Cabrinovitch was presented to him. The Crown Prince asked, "Are you the one?" and on receiving an affirmative reply said, "Well, good luck to you," and shook the man warmly by the hand: a few weeks later Cabrinovitch threw the first bomb at the Archduke. On February 2nd, 1930, under the dictatorship of King Alexander, the Crown Prince of sixteen years before, a memorial to Prinzip, the actual murderer of the Archduke, was officially unveiled at Serajevo. In these circumstances there would appear to be little necessity for monarchists to feel any regret that King Alexander and his family are themselves now the object of terrorist attempts, or that the shadows are gathering round his blood-stained throne. Monarchs who are unfaithful to the principles upon which their position depends must take the consequences, as the Hohenzollerns have also found to their cost.¹

In spite of all this it is impossible to resist the conclusion that had the Emperor Francis Joseph been ten years younger he would have seen that the Austrian attitude to Serbia was *suaviter in modo*, but the Prussians and Hungarians got the bit between their teeth, and bolted. When his death came two years later the die was cast, and a combination of Magyar obstinacy and French republican jealousy prevented his successor from putting the machine into reverse.

The tragic career of the Emperor Charles had been neglected by a world which was wrestling with the problems

¹ Those who desire further information on the complicity of Serbia in the Serajevo murders are referred to Gustav Perchetch: *Durch Lug und Trug*, and Alfred von Wegener: *Kriegsschuldfrage*. The famous poster of *John Bull*, "To Hell with Serbia," may well represent the sober judgment of the historian on the events of July, 1914.

raised by the abandonment of that monarchical principle for which he stood, until the appearance of Mr. Herbert Vivian's biography¹ called attention last year to the injustice with which he met both in life and death. The Emperor was inspired by all the old Habsburg traditions of kingship, and he was very far from wishing that *guerre à outrance* which had become an obsession in Berlin, Paris, and, in certain circles, in London. It is often objected against him that he was weak, and failed to dominate events. There is, it must be confessed, a certain amount of truth in the latter part of this charge, but it comes ill from those who have themselves, over a period of fifteen years, so signally failed to give Europe in general, and the Succession States of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in particular, even relative peace. Perhaps, however, the best answer to the critics of the Emperor Charles is that they dare not allow his son to mount the throne for fear that the old subjects of the Habsburgs would rally round it. What is incontestable is that the Emperor stood for those very things which, unpopular as they were during the war and immediate post-war periods, are essential to a stable Europe. The large economic unit, which the Austro-Hungarian Empire represented; a sane internationalism, which is inherent in the monarchical principle; and a bulwark against revolution. All these were swept away, with the Emperor Charles, in the flood of November, 1918, and mankind has been vainly struggling to get back to them ever since.

No estimate of the Emperor would be complete without an account of his efforts to bring the war to a conclusion by negotiation, for that will surely be remembered to his credit when the other events of his short reign have been forgotten. Whether his predecessor would have adopted the same line had he lived a little longer it is difficult to

¹ *The Life of the Emperor Charles of Austria.*

say, though Herr Klastersky, in his study of the Emperor Francis Joseph,¹ has produced evidence which goes to show that he would have pursued such a policy. His successor left no doubt as to his own sentiments, for in a proclamation which he issued on his accession he used the phrase, "I desire to do all in my power to end, as soon as may be, the horrors and sacrifices of the war." From a military point of view, too, the situation was favourable to one who held such opinions, for the prospect of a stalemate was becoming obvious to the most convinced chauvinist on either side. Various peace kites had already been flown, and in November, 1916, the Marquess of Lansdowne, though this fact was not known in Vienna, had laid a memorandum before the British Cabinet in which he suggested that the time had come to examine the possible bases for peace, and to make it plain that the Allies did not aim at the total destruction of the Central Powers.

In February, 1917, the Emperor got into communication with his brother-in-law, Prince Sixte of Bourbon-Parma, who was at that time serving with the Belgian army, because, although the Third Republic had been in existence for over forty years, it did not feel strong enough to allow any descendant of Henry IV to fight with the French forces. Prince Sixte readily obtained the permission of the King of the Belgians to act in the capacity which the Austrian Emperor desired,² and he was then informed of the terms upon which the latter considered peace to be possible. These were: Firstly, the conclusion of a secret armistice between Austria and Russia, in which the ques-

¹ *Der Alte Kaiser, wie nur einer ihn sah.*

² It is not a little significant that the attempt to bring peace back to the world was originated by the two oldest dynasties in Europe, and that two Kings, of Great Britain and the Belgians, were also associated with it. Nor is it any less significant that their endeavours were finally frustrated by a democratic politician.

tion of Constantinople was not to be made an issue; secondly, the restoration of Belgium and of Alsace-Lorraine, the latter a concession which had not yet been demanded by the Allies themselves; and thirdly, the formation of a Southern Slav monarchy which should include not only Serbia, Montenegro, and Albania, but Bosnia and Herzegovina as well. As a French subject, Prince Sixte naturally laid these proposals before the President, M. Poincaré, and the latter, in his turn, communicated them to M. Briand, who was then Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Both agreed that they might well form a basis for negotiation.

Prince Sixte had two interviews with the French President, and he then went to Vienna, where he saw the Emperor on March 23rd. In the interval, unfortunately, two events took place which were destined to bring about the failure of the negotiations—namely, the outbreak of the Russian Revolution and the fall of the Briand administration. The first of these soon weakened Russia to such an extent that the military party both in Germany and Austria once more raised its head, convinced that victory in the field was now again possible, while the second resulted in the installation as Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Alexandre Ribot. The new Prime Minister of France was himself a mediocrity, but he was very definitely a man of the Left—that is to say, he was a puppet in the hands of the Jacobins, the *mangeurs de curés*, and the Grand Orient. These gentry were not likely to want a peace which came from a Habsburg through a Bourbon, and so it proved. Better that another million men should lose their lives than that Royalty should have the credit of putting an end to the slaughter.

On the return of Prince Sixte from Vienna it was decided to acquaint the British Government with what was afoot. Accordingly, Ribot told Mr. Lloyd George of the Austrian

proposals, and the latter promised complete secrecy, with the reservation that he felt himself bound to mention the offer, though not to enumerate the details of it, to King George: a stipulation which throws a curious light upon what the British Prime Minister conceived to be his duty to his King. It is also significant that one of the reasons for the necessity of secrecy advanced by Prince Sixte was the fear that, if news of the proposals reached Berlin, the Austrian Emperor would be murdered within a week; in short, so little confidence was felt, by those in a position to know, in the sincerity of the monarchist sentiments of the advisers of His Imperial and Royal Majesty the Emperor William that it was not believed that they would stop at regicide. On April 18th Prince Sixte had an interview with Mr. Lloyd George, in which the latter showed himself extremely sympathetic, but warned the Prince, as M. Poincaré had also done, that the ambitions of Italy might prove an insurmountable obstacle. At this point, however, it transpired that the Italian Government was not likely to be unreasonable, though it might prefer to treat with Vienna direct, and in these circumstances the prospects of an Anglo-French agreement with Austria appeared very promising indeed.

Prince Sixte, therefore, came to London in May, and remained there until the first week in June, during which time he saw King George, and had several conversations with the Prime Minister. The position then was that both the Emperor Charles and Mr. Lloyd George were extremely anxious to come to terms, and the former, rightly convinced of the impossibility of inducing his German ally to listen to any proposals for bringing the war to an end, was prepared to negotiate a separate peace for Austria-Hungary. On the other hand, Ribot, for the reasons already stated, was at least lukewarm, and Count Czernin, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, could not be

trusted, though his master was not yet aware of the fact. Czernin was in close contact with the militarists in Berlin, and served their interests with far greater zeal than he did those of his own monarch. On one occasion he actually proposed that Austria should become a definite vassal of Germany, and when it was objected that the Emperor Charles would never agree to that, he characteristically remarked: "Leave it to me. I will soon bring him as far as that."¹ What Sunderland was to James II, Czernin was to the Emperor Charles.

Mr. Lloyd George suggested that he and the French Premier should go to Vienna, but this was far too pacific a move for Ribot's liking, and he summarily rejected it. So evident, however, was the British Government's determination to make a separate peace with Austria, if such a thing were at all possible, that, in view also of the known opinions of the French President, Ribot felt compelled to do something, and, after a good deal of negotiation between London and Paris, Great Britain and France proposed certain terms to Austria at the beginning of August. These comprised the cession of the Trentino to Italy, and the establishment of Trieste as a Free Port, while in exchange Austria-Hungary was to receive Silesia, Bavaria, and Poland within the frontiers of 1772. In other words, she was again to be the predominant power in Germany, and a bulwark against the danger that threatened from the East, though the latter was no longer the Ottoman Turk, but the rising tide of Bolshevism.

Unfortunately, this step was taken too late, and the course of the actual fighting was such as to render the very continuance of negotiations impossible. A British offensive had been launched on the Western Front at the beginning of July, while the delivery of the Allied note almost

¹ Cf. General von Cranon: *Unser Oesterreichisch-ungarischer Bundesgenosse in Weltkrieg*, p. 125.

coincided with an Italian attack that came within an ace of breaking through the Austrian resistance. This last threat was a very useful weapon in the hands of Czernin and the Pan-Germans, who were able to quote it in support of their argument that only the help of Berlin could prevent the Austrian armies from being overthrown. In October the Austrian counter-attack resulted in the Italian defeat at Caporetto, and British and French troops were hurried to the Piave, where, for the first time, they came into actual conflict with the armies of Austria-Hungary. The vicious circle was complete, and Ribot, still Minister of Foreign Affairs, though no longer Prime Minister, closed the door upon any further negotiations in a speech of quite exceptional bitterness. In the following year there was another exchange of polemics, this time between Clemenceau and Czernin, and the air was thick with such charges as "*Monsieur Czernin a menti*," and "*Herr Clemenceau hat gelogen*." Czernin even threatened to commit suicide, but unhappily omitted to carry out his threat. Once, when he was talking in this vein, a visitor laid a revolver on the table, and went away, "but," the latter afterwards related, "I waited some time on the stairs without hearing him fire."¹

It is clear that the mistake made by the Emperor and Mr. Lloyd George lay in not insisting upon an armistice while the negotiations were in progress, for had this been done not even Ribot would have been able to secure a resumption of hostilities easily. At the same time this in no way detracts from the credit due to the Emperor for having been, with the Marquess of Lansdowne, one of the first men in Europe to attempt to bring the war to an end. They were both voices crying in the wilderness of jingoism and hate, and were reviled by their contemporaries to an

¹ Herbert Vivian: *The Life of the Emperor Charles of Austria*, p. 130.

extent that to-day seems incredible. The Allies even stooped so low as to cause the grossest slanders against the Austrian Empress to be circulated among her husband's subjects, though this was hardly unexpected in view of the total disregard of monarchical solidarity that was evinced in the capitals of all the belligerent Powers save in Vienna alone. What is clear is that had the war come to an end in the spring of 1917 on the terms proposed, the world would be a very different, and much happier, place to-day. It is generally admitted that it was the last eighteen months that produced the exhaustion, and this would have been avoided, as well, in all probability, as the worst excesses of the Russian Revolution, and the financial supremacy of the United States. Finally, by his action the Emperor Charles showed how faithful he was both to the policy of Metternich and to the best traditions of monarchy. What so strong a republican as Anatole France thought of the failure of his efforts has already been shown.

It might have been thought that the Emperor's efforts for peace would have stood him in good stead with those who never wearied of repeating that they were waging a war to end war, but it was not so. The army remained loyal to the end, but the great Italian victory of Vittorio Veneto at last broken down its resistance. As for the civil population, the blockade and the Allied propaganda had done their work, and the belief that the victors would prefer to treat with republican administrations turned the waverers against their monarch. In spite, however, of his personal danger, the Emperor neither abdicated nor fled, and he finally only withdrew into Switzerland at the urgent request of the Allies. He made two attempts to regain the Hungarian throne, and failed owing, not to the opposition of the people of Hungary, but to the treachery of those upon whom he had depended, and who thought, quite rightly, that the feathering of their own nests would

be the more easily effected in his absence. Finally, the Emperor died in exile far away in Madeira, and in the lands over which he had ruled he was mourned by all save those who had supplanted him. It is a somewhat ironical commentary upon the way in which the post-war world is ordered that the Emperor Charles, who strove for peace, was sent to die in poverty, while the Emperor William, whose responsibility for the war is considerable, is allowed to live in affluence.

Having brought about the overthrow of the Habsburgs the Allies have ever since been vainly trying to find something to put in their place. Never has the truth of the old saying that if Austria did not exist it would be necessary to create it been better demonstrated than during the last fifteen years. The Succession States, whose establishment was hailed as the final vindication of the great democratic principle of nationality, have proved too small to live and too large to die, with the result that most of Central Europe is now afflicted with economic creeping paralysis. Every effort to unravel the Gordian knot has proved quite unavailing. The *Anschluss* has been vetoed by France and Italy, the French scheme for a Danubian customs union has been rejected by Italy and Germany; and the Italian suggestion for frontier rectification has proved unacceptable in Paris. Round and round go the statesmen of Europe, like rats round their cage, endeavouring to find a way out of the prison which they themselves fashioned with such care on the morrow of the war. The only solution which they refuse to consider is the only one that is practicable, and it is the restoration of the Habsburgs. That, however, would be an admission that they had been wrong, and politicians will do anything, even resort to arms, sooner than admit that.

In fine, the ancient dominions of the Habsburgs, as well as Europe as a whole, have been very definite losers by the

disappearance of the old monarchy. Austria is a head without a body. Hungary, truncated by the Treaty of Trianon, is not only economically ruined, but is politically at the mercy of a disreputable camarilla, led by Horthy and Gömbös, which governs her in its own interest. The non-Serbian provinces of Jugo-Slavia are in a state of chronic revolt, for the conception of a monarchy based upon regicidal principles is too subtle for the untutored minds of their inhabitants. Only Czecho-Slovakia, which is relatively homogeneous, and Rumania, where King Carol II has so far done his best to govern in accordance with the national interest, are not either seething with discontent or sunk in the torpor which is produced by despair. On the other hand, the old Empire was a definite economic unit, with its capital in Vienna, its granary in Hungary, its manufactures in Bohemia, and its ports on the Adriatic, while in the Danube it had an incomparable highway of communication between its constituent parts. All these advantages were deliberately sacrificed in 1918 upon the altar of an extravagant nationalism. In what proportions the blame of this state of affairs must be divided between the Allies and the rebellious subjects of the Habsburgs does not signify; what does matter is that both are sufferers.

When it is out of the question to stand still, and it is impossible to go forward, the only thing to do is to go back, and that is what must be done in the present instance. The forcible restoration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire as it existed before the war is neither practicable nor desirable, but that is no reason why a beginning should not be made with the creation of a zone of stability in the Danube basin. Let the four Great Powers of Europe—that is to say, Great Britain, Italy, France, and Germany—intimate to Messrs. Horthy and Gömbös that the day the wishes of 99 per cent. of the Hungarian people are

given effect, and the Archduke Otto is restored to his throne, a loan will be forthcoming to Hungary, and the Habsburgs will soon be back at Budapest. Once there, it will assuredly not be long before their former subjects voluntarily return to the rule of the double-headed eagle, and so a large and stable realm will naturally come into being. There is no other alternative save the perpetuation of the existing chaos. It cannot be objected by the most fervent democrat that this would imply any interference with the liberty of nations to choose their own form of government, for if self-determination means anything at all it must mean the right to decide in favour of monarchy as well as of republicanism. The convalescence of Europe will not begin until the Habsburgs are again numbered among its reigning dynasties.

Chapter IX

The Extra-European Monarchies

WHEN one turns from a consideration of the political condition of those countries that form the citadel of modern civilization to the extra-European States, it is to find the same situation—namely, that the nations which have held firm to the monarchical tradition are more prosperous, and count for more in the eyes of their neighbours, than those that have forsaken it. It is true that in the East the conception of monarchy is different. There the religious sanction is attached rather to the office than to the man or to the dynasty, so that a usurper can establish himself more easily than in the West, as has recently been demonstrated in the case of the present Shah of Persia. Nevertheless, the same fact is noticeable in Asia as in Europe: monarchy looks to the interests of the whole nation and republicanism to those of a section—*i.e.*, the ruling minority. A survey of existing conditions will serve to demonstrate the truth of this contention.

The leading revolutionary State in the world, in this fourth decade of the twentieth century, is Russia, and it is, it may be added, high time that she ceased to be considered a European Power. From the point of view of race her people are Asiatic, and their outlook is that of Asia, not of Europe. The accident, for it was nothing more, that the so-called civilization of Russia had a Byzantine religious, and a German political, veneer in no way affects the issue. The eighteenth century, which had a remarkably clear perception in these matters, never for a moment regarded the Russians as Europeans, and it was left for a

later age, with a far less developed appreciation of realities, to confuse the fiction with the fact. The result has been that a large number of misguided people in Western and Central Europe believe that recent events in Russia constitute in some sort a lesson for the whole world. Nothing could be more untrue, and the methods of government employed by Lenin and Stalin are no more capable of transplantation to the West than were those of Chaka and Theebaw, which, it may be added, they closely resemble. If the "advanced" thinkers really wish to study life in a slum, which is Russia to-day, they would do well to visit certain quarters of more than one great British city, where they would be able to observe the effects of two and a half centuries of administration based upon the principles of the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

The old Russian monarchy bore only a superficial resemblance to kingship as understood in Western Europe. Without going back to the atrocities of Ivan the Terrible, who was probably the victim of syphilis anyhow,¹ the annals of the eighteenth century present a picture for a parallel with which in the history of England and France one would have to return at least to the Dark Ages. The order of succession to the throne rested, in fact, if not in theory, upon brute force down to 1825, and the whole atmosphere of the Russian Court was Oriental, in spite of its European façade. At the same time, the country did make very considerable progress under the Czars, and their government was by no means unbearable judged by the only standard applicable—namely, the Eastern. It was doubtless corrupt, but corruption is in the Russian nature, and it was no more corrupt than that of the Soviets; it was not, especially in its latter days, very efficient, but in this respect its successor is far worse; and there was far more social liberty than there has ever been since. Above

¹ Cf. C. MacLaurin: *Mere Mortals*, pp. 98-110.

all, while there was a Czar upon the throne large sections of the population were not starving, the streets of the great cities were not infested with predatory hordes of abandoned children,¹ and, if the general standard of sexual morality was low, licence had not been officially recognized as a virtue. Any civilization worth the name must be based upon the three great principles of religion, the family, and authority, and in its own imperfect Oriental way Czarist Russia did strive to secure their recognition.

In spite of the veritable flood of books, mostly written by people who had no experience of the country in pre-revolutionary days, to the contrary, it is impossible to see how the lot of the Russian under-dog has been improved by the substitution of the Soviets for the Romanoffs. Russia is now avowedly governed in the interests of the minority which lives in the towns, and it is actually only tolerable to the members of the ruling oligarchy. Why so much attention should be paid to its relapse into barbarism by presumably intelligent people, unacquainted with its history or language, it is difficult to say. They might with equal relevance recommend for our adoption the methods of the gunmen of Chicago, or the morals of John of Leyden. The only lesson to be learnt from the present state of Russia is that the Romanoff monarchy, with all its imperfections, was immeasurably superior to the present regime, and that the sooner the Russians restore H.I.H. the Grand Duke Cyril to the throne of his ancestors the better for all of them who do not happen to be Bolshevik commissars or officials of the OGPU.

To the south of the U.S.S.R. lies a country—namely, Persia—of which the recent history very well illustrates the value of the monarchical form of government.² At the

¹ For an account of this particularly distressing feature of the Russian Revolution, cf. Vladimir Zenzinov: *Deserted*, *passim*.

² Cf. Sir Arnold Wilson: *Persia*, *passim*.

same time, the course which events have taken there would be out of the question in Europe. The present Shah rose from the humblest of origins to be dictator, and then proceeded to seat himself on the throne in the place of the effete dynasty of the Kajars. In this connection it is not without interest to note that Shah Riza Khan is, with the exception of the King of the Albanians, the only one of the numerous dictators that have exercised power since the war to raise himself to the Royal dignity, and it may be that such a step is only possible in the East, where, as has been said, there exists a different sense of political values. When the Pahlevi supplanted the Kajars all the tradition and majesty that attach to the throne of Darius was at once transferred to them, and it has not required, as it certainly would require in the West, the lapse of several generations before they could acquire the divinity that hedges Kings. The new monarch is accepted by his subjects as if he had succeeded in the normal course, and there would not appear to be any regret for the dethroned family.

The absence of the last Kajar Shah from Persia had made the country the prey of anarchy, and no one but a strong monarch could have restored order. It is true that the present occupant of the Peacock Throne has not always been too happy in his dealings with European Powers, or with foreign commercial corporations, but that cannot blind one to the fact that he is a patriotic and progressive ruler of Persia. His country, thanks almost entirely to him, stands higher in the counsels of the world than at any time within living memory, and he has maintained its independence in extremely difficult circumstances. Admittedly, his methods have often been those of an Oriental despot, but Eastern countries always are ruled by despots, and it is better that there should be one despot, as in Persia, than innumerable ones, as is the case in unhappy

China. What is undeniable is that the monarchy has saved Persia from civil war, and, quite possibly, from foreign conquest, while any experiments in republicanism would almost certainly have had the opposite effect.

In marked contrast is the state of China, which has been steadily going from bad to worse ever since the fall of the monarchy in 1912. Indeed, that country supplies but another instance of the rapid decline that has marked the history of so many nations, in all parts of the world, from the moment that they have adopted republican institutions. It is arguable, so long as one does not believe in a divine sanction for kingship above all other forms of government, that a republic of the type of Venice is as stable, and as beneficial to mankind, as any monarchy, but such a contention, however just, displays a complete ignorance of modern conditions. The Republic of St. Mark was a thing apart, and the only type of republic that finds support to-day is that which has ruined Spain and China, to quote two examples among many. The change from a monarchy to a republic in these circumstances does not imply the mere substitution of a President for a King, but rather a complete severance with the past, a general uprooting of the national tradition, and the glorification of licence as the chief end of man. It is this that has made of the once mighty Celestial Empire the Sick Man of Asia.

Given the Oriental attitude towards monarchy on the one hand, and the decay of the Manchu dynasty on the other, it is to be regretted that events did not follow the same course in China as in Persia. The first serious attempt to displace the Manchus on the Dragon Throne was made by the Taepings in the fifties and sixties of the nineteenth century, but all the evidence goes to show that had the Heavenly King, as their leader was styled, reached Peking he would not have been able to maintain himself there, for

his followers were mostly banditti.¹ Nevertheless, the suppression, with British aid, of the Taiping Rebellion gave the Manchus a further lease of life, of which they did not avail themselves. Their evil genius was the famous Dowager Empress, Tzū Hsi, who commenced her political career in 1852, when, at the age of seventeen, she became Imperial concubine to the Emperor Hsien Feng. Four years later she became the mother of T'ung Chih, and on his accession to the throne in 1861 she was appointed one of the Regents. Thereafter her influence was paramount, and when the young monarch died prematurely in 1875, she, with the help of Li Hung-Chang,² secured the departure from the regular order of succession in order to place the infant Emperor Kuang Hsü on the throne, and perpetuate her own supremacy. Her tenure of power was ruinous for China. She wasted on the building of new palaces the money that should have been spent on the fleet,³ and the result was the disastrous war with Japan in 1894-95. On the morrow of this catastrophe the Dowager Empress executed a *coup d'état*, in 1898, and deprived the Emperor Kuang Hsü, who was endeavouring to secure the adoption of a policy of reform, of all power by keeping him a prisoner for the remainder of his life. One consequence of her predominance was the Boxer Rising, which resulted in still further humiliations for China.

The connection of Tzū Hsi with the Imperial Family had, one would have thought, already been damaging enough, but worse was yet to come, for in 1904 she finally decided to reform the whole Chinese educational system by abolishing the ancient classical examinations in favour of Western learning. Curiously enough, the Emperor

¹ Cf. T. T. Meadows: *The Chinese and their Rebellions*, *passim*.

² Cf. J. O. P. Bland: *Li Hung-Chang*, pp. 98-99.

³ Cf. B. L. Putnam Weale: *The Vanished Empire*, pp. 177-178.

Kuang Hsü had intended to include some alterations in the reforms which he was considering, though he was determined to retain the basic elements of the old order, and this was one of the grievances of the Dowager Empress against him. Now she herself rushed in a panic to the other extreme, and uprooted everything which had in the past guaranteed stability to Chinese civilization, for, as Mr. J. O. P. Bland observes, "it is beyond all question true that the present chaotic state of the country's affairs is largely due to the indiscipline and unrest which a defective system of education has produced in the student class since the passing of the dynasty."¹ The Dowager Empress finally died in 1908, but by then the mischief had been done, and four years later the Dragon Throne, undermined by the incompetence of this funest female, came crashing to the ground.

Whether or not it was necessary to depose the Manchus, a question to which the answer will be supplied by the success or failure of the Emperor Hsuan Tung in his new State of Manchukuo, there was no real demand for a republic. There was an anti-dynastic movement, in many ways resembling the Taeping revolt, which Yuan Shih Kai was in a fair way of crushing when it occurred to him that the fall of the monarchy might pay him better. Of course the Government of monarchical Great Britain lent its aid to the republican cause. Under the influence of the British Foreign Office, the already beaten rebels were allowed to dictate the terms of an armistice, and the diplomatic body at Peking, forgetful of the monarch to whom it was accredited, took steps to ensure that the movements of the revolutionaries were in no way impeded.² Yuan Shih Kai now became convinced in which direction his interest lay, and in February, 1912, the Emperor Hsuan Tung abdi-

¹ *China: The Pity of It*, p. 115.

² Cf. B. L. Putnam Weale: *The Vanished Empire*, pp. 194-201.

cated upon conditions which, incidentally, have been violated by those very republican politicians who never lose an opportunity of denouncing what they are pleased to describe as the Japanese disregard for treaties. In effect, the Emperor Hsuan Tung, then a mere child, was robbed of his birthright as the result of a conspiracy on the part of his chief minister and the European Powers. Such being the case, it is some little satisfaction to know that both the guilty parties, like the nobles and priests who deserted King Alfonso XIII, paid in full for their disgraceful behaviour, though the chief sufferer has been the unfortunate Chinese peasant.

The two institutions which had for centuries held Chinese society together were the throne and the family, and the disappearance of the former was soon followed by the decay of the latter. The missionaries, needless to say, with a few notable exceptions, accelerated the good work of breaking with tradition, and so receptive did they find the minds of their pupils that within fifteen years of the advent of the republic they were streaming to the coast with their mission-stations in flames behind them. Each year has seen the anarchy which is republican China grow worse, for although in the past there were long periods of upheaval, yet the fabric of civilization was strong enough to withstand the worst shocks. To-day all is gone: throne, altar, and family. Indeed, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that, with the possible exception of Russia, there is no country to which republicanism has proved to be such an unmitigated curse as unhappy China.

On the other hand, Japan, like Persia, is an example of the way in which monarchical government can enable an Asiatic country to effect widespread reforms without disaster. However much the passing of the old order in the East may be deplored by sentimentalists in the West, some changes were inevitable, and in Japan the process of what,

for want of a better word, may be described as westernization has been carried out, not only without damage to the State, but with the definite enhancement of its power and prestige. In the case of Persia, the monarchy has been assisted in its task by the strong national feeling of the people, which prevented the centrifugal forces from gaining the upper hand, as they did in China the moment that the Dragon Throne was a thing of the past; this sentiment is equally strong in Japan, but the real bulwark of Dai Nippon has always been the aristocracy, and the latter has never, at any rate since the fall of the last Shogun, wavered in its loyalty to the throne. There is no finer ideal in the world to-day than that of the Japanese Samurai, and Europe would be well advised to study it carefully, rather than to waste its sympathy upon the incompetent Chinese republicans. Perhaps, however, it is useless, in view of the origin of most of them, to expect modern European statesmen to appreciate the aristocratic tradition.

The monarchy has always been the most important factor in the political life of Japan. While the Shogunate still stood, it was in the Emperor's name that the Shogun acted, and when it fell the Crown appeared once more as the symbol of national unity, and the representative of the national interest. The Constitution recognizes the fact, and the Emperor has a position approximating to that of the Kaiser in Imperial Germany. It is true that during the period of reconstruction Japan was singularly fortunate both in her statesmen and in her generals, but the power behind the scenes was the Emperor Mutsuhito. The record of his reign reads like a romance, for when he ascended the throne in 1867 he was but the shadowy ruler of a backward Asiatic kingdom, and when he died, forty-five years later, he was one of the mightiest monarchs in the world. He was a model sovereign, for although he was no autocrat, and was always ready to hear the opinions of

his ministers, he never allowed anyone other than himself to hold the reins. With regard to national policy, he was very cautious in arriving at a decision, but he never wavered when once he had made up his mind. In short, it would be no exaggeration to say that the Emperor Mutsuhito was one of the greatest monarchs of modern times.¹

What the monarchy meant to Japan was seen during the reign of his successor, Yoshihito. This Emperor was an invalid, and as he was not able to exercise the control that his father had done, the constitutional machinery got out of gear. In particular, the military party began to carry matters with a high hand, as they were doing in contemporary Germany, and this resulted in international complications. Eventually the Crown Prince, now the Emperor Hirohito, was nominated as Regent, but he was still very young, and much of the harm had already been done. The last ten years have witnessed a long struggle on his part to regain for the Crown the position which it held in the days of his grandfather, the Emperor Mutsuhito, and more than one of the sudden changes in Japanese foreign policy, which have puzzled European observers, has been due to this tussle between the monarch and the military party. The latter became discredited over the failure at Shanghai, and the Emperor was quick to avail himself of the opportunity to place members of the Imperial House in supreme command. The restraint which a monarchy can impose upon the militarists, but which republics usually fail to exercise, may be seen in the respective conditions of Japan and China at the present time.

It must also be observed in this connection that, from the constitutional point of view, Japan is in a state of transition. The system of Parliamentary government, on Western lines, has broken down, and it is by no means clear exactly what will take its place. There are, however,

¹ Cf. E. W. Clement: *A Short History of Japan*, pp. 148-150.

signs that the principles of Fascism, and the idea of the Corporate State, are gaining ground,¹ and they would fit in with the Japanese social system, based upon the family as it is, far better than the individualist theory upon which the existing Representative System rests. Nor would they in any way weaken the monarchy, which would be definitely stronger in a State with a functional foundation than where the mere counting of noses was regarded as the supreme test of political wisdom. In any event, the Crown will continue to be the guardian of the national interests of Japan, which is the outpost of civilization in the Far East, and the one oasis of order in a desert of unrest.

The same moral is to be drawn from the condition of India, where stability is alone to be found in the States that are governed by their own native dynasties. It is true that British India is administered with all the panoply of monarchical authority, but the Viceregal office, for all its pomp and circumstance, is an elaborate sham. King George V may have the title of Emperor of India, but his local representative is a mere puppet, dependent upon a politician in London,² whose sole care is to find a *modus vivendi* that will satisfy both the sentimentality of the British electorate and the demands of Congress. The Government of India is a mockery of the true monarchical principle, which is to care for the interests of all the peoples of that vast sub-continent, and not only for the small vocal and westernized minority. The result is for all to see. British India is seething with a discontent which the politicians in London propose to allay by the time-honoured

¹ Cf. G. C. Allen: *Modern Japan and its Problems*, pp. 55-76, and *Contemporary Japan*, vol. i, pp. 185-198.

² The present (September, 1933) Secretary of State for India began his apologia, in reply to the criticisms of Lord Lloyd, at the Conservative Party Conference at Blackpool in October, 1932, by confessing that he had "cold feet."

democratic method of an extension of the franchise, while the Native States are peaceful and orderly. Those who have the welfare of India most at heart will hope that when the revival of the monarchy takes place in Great Britain itself it will be accompanied by an application of its principles to those parts of the Indian Empire that are governed directly by the Crown.

In America the monarchical tradition is almost wholly lacking, to the great detriment of that vast continent. Those who may be inclined to question this assertion would be well advised to consider the history and present condition of Canada, probably the most Royalist of all the British Dominions, on the one hand, and of the United States on the other. In the former society rests upon those solid foundations which, in the modern world, exist in monarchical communities alone, while in the latter the last decade has witnessed the definite break-up of such civilization as had survived the Civil War. The tragedy of the United States has been that its marvellous prosperity has resulted merely in the rise of a selfish and frivolous plutocracy, and not in the establishment of an aristocracy, willing to devote its wealth and leisure to the national interests. Politics have become corrupt to an extent unparalleled even in republican history, and to-day the gangster, spiritual brother of the Chinese war-lord and spiritual descendant of the mediæval *condottiere*, is the dominating factor in the United States. Owing to the absence of such a rallying-point as is provided by a throne, or the presence of a Governor-General, society is in a continual state of flux, and political morality, always low under republican rule, has reached its nadir.

While the old tradition, inherited from colonial days, still endured, such was not the case, and the generation before the Civil War witnessed the growth of what might well have developed into a definite North American cul-

ture, British in its origin, but of the New World in its expression. The Civil War destroyed the balance between North and South, and stamped indelibly the Puritanism and materialism of the former upon the whole country. Now, with the passage of time, Puritanism as an ethical code has been abandoned, and only materialism remains. All the available evidence goes to show that the United States is an immature society already in dissolution, and there can be small doubt that bad as is its political and economic condition its moral state is far worse.¹ It is true that the same observation applies to Europe, but Europe at least has a code, even if it is only too often ignored, while the United States has none. It is also true that the latter has never had an opportunity of providing itself with a satisfactory dynasty, but that in no way weakens the general argument in favour of hereditary monarchy to be drawn from the present condition of the republican U.S.A.

The criticism that is applicable to so large a portion of Anglo-Saxon America holds good, though to a lesser extent, with regard to the Latin nations of the Continent. They have not expanded so rapidly or so considerably, and in consequence the old traditions have not lost so much of their force, as may be deduced from the fact that they are developing a culture of their own, just as the United States at one time appeared to be in a fair way of doing. Yet their republican constitutions have retarded their progress, and the continual swing of the political pendulum has delivered them over to the worst excesses

¹ Those who wish for detailed information are referred to R. S. and H. M. Lynd: *Middletown, A Study in Contemporary American Culture*. This admirable survey was compiled just before the slump, and its objectivity makes it the more valuable for those who can assimilate the lessons it contains. The reader who requires more sensational evidence can consult the works of Theodore Dreiser, Upton Sinclair, and Sinclair Lewis, *passim*.

of mob rule and to the cruelty of morose tyrants.¹ Moreover, monarchs chosen from among the reigning families of Europe would have prevented that isolation of Spanish America from the rest of the world which has been so prominent a feature of its history almost down to the present day, while the mere existence of a dynasty would have provided in each State that continuity which has been so conspicuous by its absence. Above all, had the revolted colonies become monarchies instead of republics, the theory of their government would have corresponded with the fact, and that would have proved of inestimable advantage. Ever since they rejected the rule of Ferdinand VII they have been nominally republics, but, almost always, actually monarchies in the etymological sense, and in any country in any age it is a bad thing for the theory and the practice of the Constitution to be diametrically opposed, for such a state of affairs breeds a contempt for the law which has the most serious consequences to the whole body politic. Had the monarchical, rather than the republican, principle prevailed in Spanish America some complications, which actually have been avoided, might have ensued, but they would have been as nothing to the advantages which would have accrued.

The greatest man that the New World has yet produced, Simon Bolivar, was himself strongly of this opinion. When he was at the very height of his power he made a statement to one of Canning's agents which left no doubt as to his views on the question of regime. "Of all countries South America is perhaps the least fitted for republican governments. . . . You may say I never have been an

¹ Cf. A. Arguedas: *Los Caudillos Bárbaros*, for a description of the depths of depravity to which some of these monsters descended. Unfortunately the author, although he deals with the career of Melgarejo, gives no account, possibly through motives of delicacy, of the unique incident which caused the breach between Great Britain and Bolivia.

enemy to monarchies upon general principles; on the contrary, I think it essential to the respectability and well-being of new nations. . . . Democracy has its charms for the people, and in theory it appears plausible to have a free government which shall exclude all hereditary distinctions, but England is again our example; how infinitely more respectable your nation is, governed by its King, Lords, and Commons, than that which prides itself upon an equality which holds out little temptation to exertion for the benefit of the State. . . . Indeed, I wish you to be well assured I am not an enemy to Kings or to an aristocratical government provided they be under the necessary restraints which your Constitution imposes upon the three degrees. If we are to have a new government, let it be modelled on yours.”¹

The Portuguese in America were wiser in their generation than the Spaniards, for when they separated from the mother-country they established an Empire under the Royal House of Braganza. The monarchy gave peace to Brazil for more than sixty years, during which her republican neighbours were in a state of perpetual turmoil. Why, in these circumstances, it was overthrown in 1889 is one of the problems that the historian of Latin America finds it impossible to answer. What is clear is that since that date Brazil has steadily declined, and, in spite of her vast natural resources, has seen herself eclipsed by her rivals. The boom of the war, and immediate post-war, period cannot blind the observer to the fact that the fall of the throne has been followed by the progressive disintegration of Brazilian society, which, prior to that event, was pre-eminent for its culture.² Perhaps the most pertinent comment on the events of 1889 is that of the well-

¹ Cf. Sir Charles Petrie: *The Life of George Canning*, pp. 201-203.

² Cf. Louis Mouralis: *Un Français au Brésil*, *passim*.

known authority on Latin American affairs, the late C. E. Akers, who wrote that the "comparatively apathetic attitude in connection with the deposition of Dom Pedro received a severe shock when the true character of the men at the head of affairs became understood. Most Brazilians entertained an innate dislike to militarism, and for more than half a century under the kindly rule of Dom Pedro individual rights and civil liberty had been respected. A very different state of affairs now came to the fore."¹ The recent history of Brazil shows that these observations are as applicable to-day as when they were written .

In the continents of Africa, with the exception of Egypt, and Australasia civilization has not yet been established for a sufficient period for their forms of government to warrant examination.

¹ *A History of South America*, p. 258.

Chapter X

The Objections to Monarchy

THE classic argument against monarchy is based upon the allegation that it is inconsistent with freedom. Those who advance this objection rarely make any attempt to support it by chapter and verse, and they certainly never stop to ponder Ruskin's reflection that "it is of small importance to any of us whether we get liberty; but of the greatest that we deserve it."¹ It is, of course, true that in a monarchical regime one man and one family are pre-eminent, but that does not mean a denial of freedom to the rest of the population. Nor is this state of affairs in any way peculiar to a monarchy. The wife of the President of the United States is known as "the first lady in the land," while the ruling class in the French Republic stands out from the mass of the citizens as clearly as, though with less justification than, any nobility of old. Such being the case, only the most uncompromising adherent of the doctrine of human equality could logically object to the monarchical principle on this score, and even he would be compelled by the faith that was in him to oppose republicanism on precisely the same grounds.

When people talk of liberty and freedom they seldom trouble to state whether they are using the words in a political or a social sense, but in the present instance this is a matter of small importance. The enjoyment, or the absence, of freedom has nothing whatever to do with monarchy as such, for, as has already been shown, the latter can exist in any form that circumstances demand.

¹ *Cestus of Aglaia.*

The Englishman in the reign of King George V is in full possession of all that he associates with political freedom, which is to say that every five years he has the privilege of recording his vote for one or other of several ladies or gentlemen whom a party caucus has previously selected as candidates, and in the interval he can grumble to his heart's content, always provided that his attitude is not considered likely to lead to the commission of that most mysterious of crimes, "a breach of the peace." On the other hand, the down-trodden (*i.e.*, since they preferred Fascism to Parliamentary Government) subjects of King Victor Emmanuel can have a drink at any hour they want it, and are not compelled to satisfy their craving for nicotine or chocolates before eight o'clock in the evening.

The monarchists, however, can carry the war into the enemy's territory with every confidence of victory, and ask if it is not a fact that liberty fares worse under republican rule. The most striking example of democratic denial of social freedom was the enforcement of Prohibition in the United States. It is true that a similar measure was for a time in operation in one or two of the Scandinavian countries, but that is beside the point for those who argue that republicanism is synonymous with liberty. Russia is in theory a republic, if an oligarchy in fact, yet even the most enthusiastic admirer of Soviet methods would hardly claim that true freedom was to be found in Moscow. Nor does history bear out the theory that monarchies repress, while republics encourage, liberty. The subjects of Charles I, of Louis XVIII, and of Alfonso XIII were infinitely freer than the citizens of the Commonwealth, of the three French Republics, or of the two Spanish republican regimes. Only those who confuse monarchy with tyranny can pretend that the former is inimical to freedom, unless, indeed, freedom is to be confounded with that licence which monarchy, acting in the

interests of the nation as a whole, must inevitably endeavour to check.

Another argument that is advanced against hereditary monarchy is that there is no guarantee of the ability of a King or a Queen to fulfil adequately the functions of their office. This is true, but the advocates of republicanism can hardly maintain that it brings better men to the top than does monarchy. The world's Presidents to-day are very definitely inferior to its Kings, and few men of ability have reached the presidential chair of France or the United States—to name the two leading republics. The average standard of the monarchs is indisputably higher, and, in addition, they represent both the continuity of the national tradition and the supremacy of the national interest. There would, let it be freely admitted, be a strong case for republicanism if it could be proved that it placed the helm of State in the most capable hands, but even its apologists do not claim that it does any such thing. In effect, there is no need, at this date in the twentieth century, for the monarchist to raise the question of Divine Right: all he need do, as he buries the corpse of republicanism beneath the weight of his arguments, is to murmur to himself "*si monumentum requiris, circumspice*," and to direct the gaze of any mourners who may be present towards the unhappy state of those countries which have adopted the republican form of government.

But, it is objected, a hereditary monarch may be mad or vicious, or he may become such. This is true, but it is difficult to see what bearing it has upon the case for monarchy. The eldest son of Charles III of Spain, was so unbalanced a nympholete that he was quite unable to refrain from an attempt upon the virtue of any attractive female that he saw,¹ and he was accordingly excluded from the

¹ Cf. Sir N. W. Wraxall, Bt.: *Historical Memoirs of his own Time*.

succession both to Spain and Naples. When George III went mad a Regent was appointed. Monarchy allows for the necessary provision to be made in cases of this sort, which are, besides, extremely rare. Moreover, republicanism is no guarantee against the insanity of the head of the State, as the case of Deschanel clearly proves. As for vice, its effect depends upon the form it takes, for it is possible to be a good ruler and a bad man or woman. Several of the Plantagenets were of this type, as well as Catherine the Great. On the other hand, saints are often a dismal failure when it comes to governing their fellows, and Henry VI is more popular with those who, after the lapse of centuries, are endeavouring to get him canonized, than he was with his unhappy subjects. If monarchs are as prone to be mad or bad as lesser mortals, it really makes no difference to the principle which they represent.

At one time, too, it was objected against monarchy that it implied militarism and war, and otherwise sensible people were found declaring that only the triumph of democracy could ensure peace, stability, and progress. "War's a game that, were their subjects wise, Kings would not play at" represented the attitude of a large body of opinion, and there can be little doubt that innumerable Englishmen joined the colours in 1914 in the belief that the contest had been provoked by one or two scheming monarchs; once they, and everything for which they stood, had been overthrown, all would be well, and the way would be clear for a federation of mankind. The belief was sedulously fostered that the war was the work of the Emperor William, though why, if this was the case, such hard terms were imposed upon Germany after the monarchy had been abolished no one stopped to enquire. For years after the Treaty of Versailles this belief persisted, and it lingered on in many circles until the triumph of Hitler and his Nazis compelled its abandonment. It is

now realized, somewhat tardily it is true, that the German people wanted war in 1914, just as they will want it again as soon as they think they are sure of victory. The Hohenzollerns, as has been freely admitted during the course of this work, are by no means satisfactory representatives of the monarchical principle, but they were the embodiment of pacifism compared with Hitler and the present rulers of the Reich.

The identification of monarchy with war would appear to proceed from a misinterpretation of the facts. Because in the past there were frequent wars, and because at that time monarchy was the normal form of government, therefore monarchy meant war. The statement of fact is true, but the deduction is false. Peace and war are not linked up with this regime or that, but are the result of public opinion, which is generally inclined to be bellicose. Democracy has to take more account of this than any other form of government, and consequently it is at the mercy of those vested interests which may find it to their advantage to stampede a nation into war. A typical case of this was the Spanish-American War, which was a quite unnecessary conflict, but was precipitated to suit the convenience of "big business," which worked on an ignorant public opinion through a corrupt press. When the war was over these same interests compelled the United States to pay a sum of £4,000,000 to Spain, nominally as compensation for the loss of the Philippine Islands, but actually in order to enable the Spanish Government to pay its debts to the armament firms. In parenthesis, it may be remarked that not only were the wars waged by the monarchies of old far less bloody affairs than those in which democracy indulges, but they did settle something: furthermore, monarchy also knew how to make peace.

The history of the fifteen years which have elapsed since the Armistice should be sufficient, one would have

thought, to have put the whole question of peace and war in its proper perspective. Never has there been a period when such respect was paid to democratic doctrines, and rarely has there been one that was so disturbed. Triumphant democracy has failed miserably to settle the problems which its own peace settlement created, and it is not a little significant that the only statesman in Europe—namely, Signor Mussolini—to produce, in the Four Power Pact, a definite plan for the establishment of peace should be an avowed supporter of monarchy, and an opponent of everything for which the French Revolution stands. Whatever blessings may have been secured to mankind by the fall of the thrones, international peace and stability have not been among them.

Democracy in itself need not be aggressive, and in certain instances, notably in the case of Switzerland, it has, it must be confessed, shown itself unprovocative. What has done, and is doing, the mischief is nationalism, the logical consequence of democracy. It has frequently been objected against monarchy that it took no count of nationality, and the Treaty of Vienna was held up to execration on this score as the typical handiwork of the old order. It is doubtful whether anyone would be found to echo this complaint in these latter days. The treaties that terminated the last war were based upon the principle of nationality, and the result has been disaster, political, financial, social, and economic. Now the Nazis are putting forward the theory that all who are of Germanic origin and Nordic stock (whatever that may be) should be in the Reich, and if they persist in this claim it will no longer be a mere question of redressing the admitted injustices of the Versailles settlement, for the whole existing European system will be in the melting-pot. The monarch regards all his subjects, so long as they are loyal to him, in the same light, whatever their race and creed. Hitler's fol-

lower's have recently been slandering the memory of the Habsburgs for their tenderness to the Jews in the heyday of their power, but abuse from such a quarter and in such a connection is surely the highest of compliments.

Some monarchs, such as Queen Victoria, the Emperor Francis Joseph, and King Alfonso XIII, made the mistake of not treating nationalism seriously enough, but the opposite course has proved fatal in the extreme. In the eighteenth century there was true cosmopolitanism, but the coming of democracy led to an excessive insistence upon nationality as the basis of the State, and that in its turn caused the minorities to agitate for independence. "Big fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em, and little fleas have lesser fleas, and so *ad infinitum*." The Czechs, for instance, were largely responsible for the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire because they wanted to be autonomous, but no sooner had they achieved their purpose than they found that there were minorities within their own borders prepared to play the same game with them that they had played with the Habsburgs. Democracy cannot rid itself of the charge of having encouraged the nationalist monster until nothing is safe from his depredations; while as for the old accusation against monarchy that it starved the beast, this is an item on the credit, rather than on the debit, side of its account.

Then, again, there are still to be found those who maintain that a republic is in some mysterious way more virtuous than a monarchy. Courts, such people argue, are hotbeds of corruption, and they bring out what is worst in human nature. That there have been courts that were sinks of iniquity no one would attempt to deny, but, in this connection, it is not without interest to note that more often than not it is the monarchs of blameless life who have lost their thrones, for there was surely no objection that could be taken on the score of morality to Richard II,

Henry VI, Charles I, Louis XVI, and Nicholas II. The theory that republicanism is inherently virtuous probably dates from the time of Cato, but it has no foundation in fact. Perhaps courts do occasionally attract ladies who prefer pleasure to chastity, but what of Felix Faure? Perhaps they do become from time to time the happy hunting-ground of shady financiers, but what of those who surrounded Grant and Harding? In any event the instances of corrupt courts are the exception, and from an historical point of view it is permissible to doubt whether the corruption was not greatly exaggerated by contemporaries with salacious minds. A Procopius can hardly be regarded as a social Baedeker.

What cannot be denied is that the standard of public life is higher in a monarchy than in a republic. There can be no comparison between Great Britain and Italy, on the one hand, and France and the United States on the other. Germans are unanimous that there is more corruption in their country now than there was before the war. The spectacle of a man, the highest in the land, continually working, like King George V, for his subjects' good, and solicitous only for the national interest in the broadest sense, cannot fail to be, and in fact always is, inspiring. It is unhappily only too true that the level of politics even in Great Britain is, as has already been shown, a great deal lower than used to be the case, but that has been almost entirely due to the eclipse of the Crown. To say that corruption does not exist under a monarchy would be manifestly absurd, but it is both less open and less extensive, and so its influence is nothing like so demoralizing. Public honesty is not a republican virtue.

At this point it will be asked why, if monarchy alone can restore stability to a distressed world, do not the latter's statesmen have immediate recourse to it? Monarchy has been proved to be no enemy to liberty; it is a guarantee

that the Head of the State shall be a person at least of competence; it provides a check on militarism and extravagant nationalism; and it forms a deterrent to corruption; why, then, has this ideal form of government not been universally adopted? The answer lies in the type of men who are controlling the destinies of the world at the present time.

Recorded history goes to show that the men with the longest vision politically are drawn, in the vast majority of cases, from one of two classes, the aristocracy or the peasantry, while the *petite bourgeoisie* can provide but timid and narrow-minded politicians, unable to see the wood for the trees. The nearer one gets to the soil the greater would appear to be the political genius for leadership, however difficult of explanation may be the reason for this. On the other hand, the small tradesman, the small lawyer, and the small journalist, however praiseworthy they may be in their own sphere, definitely lack the capacity necessary to manage the affairs of a nation. The tragedy of the present regime in France is that it is "small" from every standpoint, and that is why the country counts for so much less under the republic than under the monarchy; the Third Republic has produced three great diplomats, the brothers Cambon and Barrère, but that is all. Yet those who are the masters of modern Europe, who posture at Geneva and elsewhere as super-men before an admiring public, are drawn from this very *petit bourgeois* class whose whole outlook may be summed up in the word "small."

In effect, it is not the problems of the world that are greater than ever before, but the men who are smaller. No one who has attended an international conference can fail to carry away the impression of a gathering of definitely third-rate politicians endeavouring to deal with questions which they have not the mental equipment even

to understand. Men who would only be at their ease in weighing a pound of cheese, or in measuring out a litre of wine, are asked to arbitrate upon the ethnological problems of the Danube valley, or the intricacies of the ratio of silver to gold. It would be comic, were it not so tragic. To and fro they wander, from the Geological Museum in South Kensington to the Palace of the League of Nations at Geneva, from Washington to Lausanne, with their ill-fitting clothes, their bad manners, their unspeakable wives, and, last but by no means least, their very limited intelligences. In spite of the failure of these people to produce any sort of a solution, the world is still supposed to exult when it reads that yet another individual drawn from this stratum of society has become Prime Minister of Ruritania. It is not snobbery that compels one to the conclusion that such people, save on the rarest of occasions, are not likely to be up to their work, but plain common sense.

It is not surprising that such men have not the wit to see that the salvation of the world lies in the triumph of the monarchical principle. Where Kings are concerned they suffer from a very decided inferiority complex, and because they feel uncomfortable in the presence of Royalty they support a republicanism which is inimical to the best interests of their respective countries. In marked contrast with the mediocrities who are at the head of affairs in so many states is Signor Mussolini, the greatest figure of the twentieth century, and he is a convinced monarchist. The fact that so many of the world's leaders to-day are republicans is an argument, not against monarchy, but in its favour.

Chapter XI

The Lesson of History

HISTORY has been by no means inaptly defined as philosophy teaching by example, and if this definition be accepted, then the case for monarchy is unanswerable. It has already been shown, in the leading countries of the world and over a period of several centuries, that the apogee of a nation occurs under a monarchy, and that republicanism brings decay in its train. It is true that for a brief space a country may appear to have been the gainer by the adoption of a republican form of government, but this invariably proves to be but a false dawn, and the night comes down darker than ever before. England in the early days of the Commonwealth, and France immediately after the Revolution, seemed to have profited by their regicidal proceedings, but long before the return of Charles II the former was plunged in economic chaos, while the history of republican France has been one of steady decline. It has been the same with Portugal, Spain, and Germany, while the disruption of the Dual Monarchy has played no small part in precipitating the world crisis. It is doubtful whether there is a single honest man in Europe to-day who would say with any sincerity that the Continent is better for the overthrow of so many thrones.

Already mankind is everywhere seeking to escape from the consequences of republicanism, though, owing to the short-sightedness of its leaders, it is to dictatorship rather than to monarchy that it is turning. The appeal to self-interest is never in the long run enough, and human nature craves for some pageantry in its public life. Germany of

the Weimar Constitution, for example, was a drab place to those who had been brought up amid the splendour, however superficial, of the Hohenzollern Empire, and so the showy pomp of the Nazis made an irresistible appeal. Hitler has shown himself shrewd enough in this respect, and parade follows parade in the attempt to win to his side the German love of display. Elsewhere it is the same story. The modern world has been so mechanized that its inhabitants are clutching at every chance which presents itself to escape from its monotony, and he is a wise ruler who surrounds his power with a certain amount of pomp and circumstance. It was the same in the Middle Ages, when the sordidness of everyday existence was relieved by the festivals of the Church and by the knightly tournaments. In monarchy this very natural craving can be satisfied, and King Edward VII showed great wisdom in reviving so much of the external glory attaching to the British Crown. It may be regrettable, but it is certainly indisputable, that a regime which appeals to the head alone is nothing like so strong as one which appeals both to head and to heart. In these post-war days the Parliamentary System cannot claim the allegiance of either; dictatorship is essentially an affair of logic and reason; but the appeal of monarchy is both to sentiment and to the intellect, and it is the duty of monarchists to see that the truth of this is generally admitted.

Furthermore, no government or regime can look forward to a long life which is not based upon tradition, and history shows that the converse of this proposition is also true—namely, that tradition will often serve to keep a regime in power when it has no other justification for its continued existence. When so many nations adopted the republican form of government after the war they broke with tradition, and now most of them are vainly struggling to get back to it. The present position of Austria is a case

in point. Dr. Dollfuss has invoked the assistance of every national force which he can command in his heroic struggle to maintain the independence of his country, but he has omitted to restore the monarchy. Austria is an abstraction to its inhabitants, but if the national cause were once personified by the Archduke Otto it would receive an impetus that would ensure victory. As has been shown, the Third Republic in France was favoured by the victorious Germans in 1871 because, not having behind it the tradition which was at the service of the Comte de Chambord, it kept the country weak. Dr. Dollfuss would do well to take this lesson to heart, for it will not be until the Habsburgs are back in Vienna that Austria will be safe from the German Nazis.

One of the most brilliant of the younger Tories, Mr. Hugh Sellon, has very well described¹ the force of tradition incarnate in monarchy: "Think for a moment of Buckingham Palace, and then of the Elysée in Paris. The one exercises over the colonial visitor an irresistible attraction, and I confess that, born in London though I was, I can never see the Standard with the Leopards of England and the Lions of Scotland floating beyond the trees in St. James's Park without feeling very acutely that here is, in truth, 'the hearth of our people's people,' where the monarchy of our thousand years unites all hopes and aspirations in this country and the Dominions into one fellowship before the throne. I doubt whether the most patriotic Frenchman could experience the same feelings when passing the palace where lives, not the heir of Hugh Capet and Saint Louis, but the elected First Magistrate of the Republic. The President of a Third Republic or the King of a July Monarchy may be an admirable official, worthy of the utmost respect and loyalty, but he can hardly produce the same personal feelings, quite irrational, like all per-

¹ Hugh Sellon: *Whither, England?* pp. 175-177.

sonal feelings, that are produced by the head of a monarchy whose history is that of the nation it rules. I can hardly imagine there being enacted before the palace of an elected President . . . the scene that was witnessed before Buckingham Palace not many years ago, when, amidst a vast and silent crowd whom affection and loyalty to the throne had brought together, a visitor from the Dominions knelt in the rain and mud of a December night, and prayed that the King's life might be spared.

"Who would have thought, a century ago, that the monarchy would rise to the heights of prestige and popularity that it enjoys to-day? Is this not a warning against rashly abolishing an old institution because it appears no longer to be desirable or useful? By preserving it you will preserve for future generations an institution which may again become of incalculable use to the nation, to a degree quite unattainable to a new institution that cannot draw dignity and loyalty from its historic past. For to find the source of the prestige of the monarchy we must go not only to the living, in London or Windsor, but also to the dead in Winchester, where, in the cradle of the English race, are the memorials of the Princes of Winchester, who, as the Royal House of Wessex, laid the foundations of our national unity, and whose descendant rules over this kingdom and Empire to this day. In the age and continuity of the House of Cerdic is one of the factors which, however instinctive it may be, makes for the strength of Cerdic's heirs at this present time."

The whole of recorded history goes to show that one idea can only be defeated by another, for brute force alone will not avail to defeat it. Without going any further back than the struggle against the French Revolution we find Louis XVIII opposing to it the doctrine of legitimism, and the weapon which he forged was soon used by Talleyrand with the greatest possible effect. The Liberal theory of Free

Trade and the non-interference of the State in industrial matters was the orthodoxy of the day until Karl Marx successfully challenged it with his conception of Socialism and the class war. This idea, in its turn, held the stage until Sorel began to preach Syndicalism, and Signor Mussolini brought the Frenchman's scheme to perfection in the Corporate and Ethical State. The supporters of monarchy should take this lesson to heart, and instead of trying to enlist sympathy for their cause by lamenting the departed glories of this or that dynasty, they should proceed to the attack.¹ If ever there was an age when it was necessary that the nations of the world should have peace at home it is the present, and the monarchical idea is the embodiment of this necessity. The perilous plight of civilization, attacked from within as well as from without, no longer permits nations to enjoy the luxury of internecine strife between various vested interests. Yet monarchy is the one form of government that does represent the interest of all, and is pledged to make that interest prevail over the factions, so that if only monarchists will use their opportunity they have, to use a colloquial term, the game in their hands. They are in a position to combat one idea with another, the idea that the sum of individual interests is the national interest with the idea of national unity based upon justice for all.

It is not, indeed, unnatural that monarchy should for a time have fallen into disfavour, for there was little place for it in a world dominated by centrifugal influences. When the comfortable belief obtained that the more one helped oneself the more one helped others and the State, the idea of a monarchy co-ordinating the activities of each in the common interest of all was naturally out of favour.

¹ Cf. Douglas Jerrold: *Storm over Europe*, *passim*. This book, although written in the form of a novel, is a veritable handbook for monarchists.

It was all right to grind the faces of the poor, because in some mysterious way not only was such behaviour good for the poor, but it was also good for the country too, so the grinder of their faces could take round the collection-plate on Sunday without a single qualm of conscience. All this was a natural consequence, at any rate so far as Great Britain was concerned, of the Whig triumph of 1688, which canonized as martyrs in the cause of civil and religious liberty those who had risen against Charles I in defence of their own pockets. The Liberals of the Victorian era were the spiritual descendants of the Puritans and the Whig oligarchs. If Hampden was a hero and a patriot for refusing to pay taxes for the protection of the coasts against pirates, then what fault could be found with the respectable subject of Queen Victoria who allowed women to work in his factory for twelve or sixteen hours a day for a mere pittance? Hampden was indifferent to the sufferings of the wretched inhabitants of Baltimore,¹ sacked by the Algerines in 1631, so why should the followers of Palmerston and Gladstone worry about the conditions in the mills? It is little short of a miracle that the monarchy should have continued to exist when such ideas were the orthodoxy of the day.

These comfortable (that is to say, to the rich) doctrines are now a thing of the past, and if the tide has not yet turned towards monarchy it is very largely the fault of the monarchists themselves. It is quite useless to disguise the fact that the average Royalist to-day suffers from a strongly developed inferiority complex. This is the result of two things. In the first place, his gaze is generally directed towards the past, rather than to the future. If he is an Austrian, he is thinking of the glories of the reign of the Emperor Francis Joseph, and not of that of the Em-

¹ Cf. Père F. Don: *Histoire de Barbarie et de ses Corsaires*, p. 277.

peror Otto; if a Spaniard, he is more inclined to regret King Alfonso XIII than to hope for King John III. Even in England it is far more common to hear monarchists talk of "the good old days," even of Queen Victoria and King Edward VII (which were in reality none too good for the monarchical idea, as we have seen), than to find them determined to revive all the greatness of English kingship in King Edward VIII, King Albert I, or Queen Elizabeth II. Just as when people talk of the past they usually mean the mid-Victorian era, for their memories carry them no further, and their knowledge of history is infinitesimal, so when they say "the King couldn't do this or that now" they are making in their own minds a comparison with fifty years ago, and an inexact one at that. In any event, it isn't the Teutonic monarchy of the Hanoverians that is wanted, but the popular English kingship of pre-Revolution days. If the loyal subjects of King George V must look back, then let them direct their gaze upon Whitehall, not Herrenhausen.

Nor is this all, for monarchists are usually content to remain upon the defensive, and to take their opponents at the latters' own valuation. In short, they behave as if they were fighting a losing battle, when, in actual fact, the wind and tide are both in their favour if they would but take advantage of them. There is a hymn which contains the words, "Christian, up and smite them," and the advice is the best that can be given to the monarchist of to-day. He is too much under the influence of past defeats, and innumerable Royalists in all countries believe in their own hearts that they are supporters of a lost cause. In many respects this attitude is only natural, for until the poison of 1789 had worked its way out of the body politic there was little that could be done, but at the present time it is a definite obstacle in the path of victory. Monarchists should take courage from what has happened in Italy.

Eleven years ago the vast mass of Italians were rather ashamed of their country, and were ready to admit that it was not in the same class as Great Britain and France. Now, thanks to the inspiration of Signor Mussolini, there is hardly an Italian who does not consider himself a citizen of the greatest nation on earth. Let, therefore, the monarchists of the world take heart, and pass from the defensive to the offensive. The enemy is nothing like so formidable as he looks, and it will not require any very great skill to show that if civilization is to be saved its salvation must be in abandoning a system which has not stood the test of time and of adversity, and in a return to hereditary monarchy.

There is at the same time a real danger that owing to the lack both of political skill and of unity on the part of monarchists in the different countries dictatorship may be allowed to take the place of kingship in the popular imagination. This would be a very real disaster from every point of view. Monarchy is a system, and dictatorship a form, of government. A dictator is invariably a mere bird of passage in the political life of a nation, and if he is to be invested with the attributes of royalty his disappearance must involve an unnecessary shock to the whole body politic. It cannot be too often or too strongly insisted that monarchy can exist with any form of government that looks to the national interest, but a dictator must dictate or go. Changing circumstances require different attitudes on the part of the executive. In periods of crisis a strong executive is essential, but at other times it may be advisable to give considerable freedom to the legislative. Monarchy can play its part on either occasion, but dictatorship cannot. For these reasons, therefore, the latter can never take the place of the former. No doubt, to quote but two examples, Portugal and Hungary are happier under their present masters than they would be under

the Parliamentary System, but the moment that their respective autocrats are removed chaos will break loose again. The same is probably also true of Poland. Were these countries also hereditary monarchies, the disappearance of their dictators would not necessarily involve them in disorder.

If only its supporters will have the courage of their convictions the triumph of monarchy is assured. The signs are that just as the Parliamentary System was the outstanding feature of the nineteenth century, so the Corporate State, with its ethical basis, will be that of the twentieth. Now the foundation of the Corporate State, as once of the Feudal System, is status, and monarchy, the apex of the pyramid, is as necessary to the former as it was to the latter. The political perspicacity of the present generation will be judged by its attitude towards the monarchical principle during the next ten years.

Chapter XII

The Future of the British Monarchy

KING GEORGE V has not only raised the prestige of the monarchy to a height unknown for centuries, but he has proved by his action when the national fortunes were at their lowest ebb that without it the strife of the parties would be pushed to such extremes as to imperil the existence of the State. The Crown has been shown to be the mortar that holds the fabric together, and the fact should not be forgotten. The Crown is the one popular institution in the country at the present time, and if tranquillity is to be restored it can only be by ensuring that the monarchy and the monarch are never again treated as ciphers in the Constitution. The violence of the years that immediately preceded, as of those that immediately followed, the late war was directly attributable to the decline of the Royal power, or, to put it in another form, to the eclipse of the national by the sectional interest. To a great extent this was due to the jealousy of the politicians, but the democratic madness which temporarily carried away the mass of the British people also had its share in bringing about this unfortunate state of affairs. Financial chaos and economic ruin have been the result of this madness, and the ordinary citizen now shares the view of Mr. Gordon Selfridge that in another hundred years there will probably not be a democracy left in the world. The parties will doubtless continue to hamper the monarchy all they can, but the Crown has everything in its favour, and the nation is looking to it for the lead which the politicians have so signally failed to give.

In the eyes of the man-in-the-street Parliamentary

government, and everything for which it stands, is discredited. There was a time when the reports of the debates in the House of Commons were widely read, and when the game of party warfare as played at Westminster was everywhere watched with interest and approval. To-day even the more serious papers only devote, save in very exceptional circumstances, two or three columns to Parliamentary proceedings, and it is doubtful if five per cent. of the younger generation so much as glances through them. It is not, *pace* the pessimists, that there is no interest in the more serious things of life, but that there is a conviction that these are not likely to be discussed in the House of Commons. The natural corollary is that the status of the politician has, within living memory, declined to the Continental level. In spite of all propaganda, no one believes that Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Baldwin are of the stature of Gladstone and Disraeli, let alone of Pitt and Canning, and they are accepted, *faute de mieux*, rather than admired. As for the ordinary M.P., far from enjoying the prestige which was his of yore, he is now, with one or two outstanding exceptions, regarded as a joke, and rather a poor one at that. His personal honesty is, so far, generally unquestioned, but his imbecility is taken for granted.

The reason for this is not to be found, as some would have us believe, in the progress of events abroad, to which the average Englishman never pays the slightest attention unless his pocket is affected. The disrepute of Parliament is due to its failure to set the nation on its feet after 1918, and to the gross extravagance for which all parties were responsible. It is true that the electorate was to blame for returning to Westminster representatives whose sole idea of government was to squander the national resources in bribes to their constituents, but the ordinary voter had little choice in the matter; the difference between the three

parties, so far as extravagance was concerned, was one of degree rather than kind. For a time the mass of citizens accepted the statement of the politicians that all was well, and that to live on one's capital represented the highest financial wisdom, but when the crash came the idols did not remain on their pedestals. To-day Parliament is regarded, not as the champion of the civil and religious liberty of the British people, but as a body of spendthrifts who are always devising fresh restrictions on the freedom of the individual.

Thus the Crown finds its chief rival discredited. The House of Commons had the power, and it misused it. In the days of the nation's prosperity the country did not notice, or could afford to ignore, Parliament's abuse of its stewardship, but when the number of unemployed ran into seven figures, and month after month the trade returns were steadily worse, it was possible to overlook the breach of trust no longer: the Crown came to the rescue, and the Crown has reaped its reward. However much the older people may pretend to ignore the fact, a generation is growing up which looks upon Parliamentary government, as the Victorians understood it, as an anachronism.

The members of the Royal Family do not realize how popular they are in relation to the politicians. In their actions and speeches one can detect a caution that is quite unnecessary, for the country as a whole would follow them rather than the party leaders. It is certain that the latter do not appreciate this fact, but it is true all the same. The mass of the British people realize that the Crown stands above the party bickerings, and when the King or the Prince of Wales gives his views on a subject it knows that he is speaking with sincerity, and that he has, as the saying goes, "no axe to grind." His interests are its interests, which it does not believe to be the case with the politician. It is thus in no way surprising that the usual

criticism of a Royal speech is that it is too vague. What the ordinary citizen wants is to know the real views of the King or the Prince of Wales, for on account of their enormous knowledge of men and affairs their opinions must be of great value: if these happen to clash with those of the politicians, then so much the worse for the politicians. A generation ago this would probably not have been the general attitude, and the politicians have only themselves to blame for the change.

On Imperial matters the Prince of Wales possesses far greater knowledge than any British minister, and had the politicians not been so jealous of the monarchy he might well have been invited to preside over the deliberations of the Ottawa Conference. Both the King and he, and to a lesser extent the Duke of York, are daily meeting people from all parts of the Empire, and are thus in continual contact with Imperial opinion. The Secretary of State for the Dominions may, while he is in office, be in closer touch officially, but as he was probably President of the Board of Trade in the last administration, and may be first Lord of the Admiralty in the next, his personal interest in the Empire can never be so great as that of the monarch who is its head. Particularly is this so at the present time, when both the Sovereign and the Heir-Apparent have always taken the closest personal interest in the Empire and its problems. One would like to think that they are allowed by their constitutional advisers to use their knowledge in the national interest.

It would be idle to pretend that there is not another side to this picture of the British monarchy to-day. If the Crown has its strength, it has its weaknesses; to arrive at a true estimate of the former we must carefully consider the latter.

In the first place, the Royal Family is dangerously out of touch with the leaders of thought. This is not to say

that its members refrain from giving their patronage to the arts—this is certainly not the case—but they do not come into personal and unofficial contact with men of letters to anything like the extent that they do with politicians, generals, admirals, and captains of industry. This neglect of those who are moulding the opinion of the rising generation is a serious, if common, mistake on the part of monarchs, and it undoubtedly had much to do with the disasters that befell King Charles X of France and King Alfonso XIII of Spain. It is true that in England the man of letters counts for far less than in any other country in the world, but his importance is growing somewhat. It is not enough for an occasional professor, or novelist of established reputation, to be asked to dinner by one of the younger members of the Royal Family, or for the Presidents of the various Royal Societies to be invited to a garden party at Buckingham Palace once a year.

King Edward VII finally broke the Victorian prejudice against "trade," and invited, in large numbers, those who were engaged in industry and commerce first of all to Marlborough House, when he was Prince of Wales, and afterwards to Buckingham Palace. In this way he frustrated any tendency on the part of the *haute bourgeoisie* to become anti-monarchical, as, for instance, happened in Russia, where they actually supplied the Bolsheviks with money to overturn the Czar, who had ignored them. What is required now is that the monarchy should associate itself with the thought of the country in the same way that King Edward associated it with the commercial and industrial activities. That a number of the younger writers of to-day are anti-monarchical is only too true, but their ranks will assuredly be depleted if the monarchy will show that it is prepared to favour those whose views are Royalist. There is danger in a situation where a man of letters does not come into intimate contact with Royalty

unless he possesses some social or political qualification such as a title or membership of the legislature. Of all the activities of the country at the present time the Royal Family is probably most ignorant of the intellectual.

Since the war sight has been lost of that international monarchist solidarity upon which both Queen Victoria and King Edward VII laid so much stress. In 1889 the British Government refused to participate in the Paris Exhibition of that year on the ground that its primary object was to commemorate the centenary of the French Revolution, an event of which Great Britain, as a monarchical Power, could not approve. Then, again, it was not until three years after the murder of King Alexander I of Serbia that Great Britain resumed diplomatic relations with that country. The attitude of King Edward on this occasion might well serve as a pattern for future British sovereigns to follow. When he was told that Austria-Hungary and Russia were prepared to recognize the new Serbian regime, the King observed that they were interested countries, and there was "no need for England to recognize a government consisting of assassins."¹ King Peter, however, was very desirous of recognition, and he induced the Czar and King Victor Emmanuel to instruct their ambassadors to take the matter up with King Edward personally. The latter received them in audience at Windsor, and gave a reply which deserves to be quoted in full: "I regret very much indeed that I cannot comply with your suggestions. The assassination of King Alexander and Queen Draga was so terrible that it made a deep impression on public opinion in England. Public opinion has not yet recovered from the shock, and would certainly not approve of a re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Serbia; and you know well that I and my government must take into account the public opinion of our country.

¹ Sir Sidney Lee: *King Edward VII*, vol. ii, p. 270.

And, besides this reason, I have another, and, so to say, a personal reason. *Mon métier à moi est d'être Roi*. King Alexander was also by his *métier un Roi*. As you see, we belonged to the same guild, as labourers or professional men. I cannot be indifferent to the assassination of a member of my profession, or, if you like, a member of my guild. We should be obliged to shut up our businesses if we, the Kings, were to consider the assassination of Kings as of no consequence at all. I regret, but you see that I cannot do what you wish me to do."¹ It was not until the principal regicides had been placed upon the retired list that recognition was granted.

It is difficult to believe that a similar attitude would be adopted at the present time. Whether, given the circumstances of the moment, King George could have carried the day against Mr. Lloyd George in 1917 had he insisted upon the reception of the Russian Imperial Family in England is a moot point, and in view of the pathetic belief in the virtues of democracy that then prevailed he was probably well-advised not to try. A good deal of water has flowed under the bridges since then, and when King Alfonso arrived in London after the revolution in Spain he was given such a reception as left no doubt as to the monarchical sentiments of the British people. Indeed, there is reason to believe that this reception was extremely distasteful to the Socialist administration then in office, and its supporters in the House of Commons were allowed to ask the most offensive questions with regard to the exiled monarch.² Socialism is international, if monarchism is not, and it is a significant fact that while the mob was howling outside the Royal Palace in Madrid the representative of King George V, who was responsible to the

¹ Edward Legge: *King Edward in his True Colours*, pp. 81-82.

² Thereby, of course, betraying that inferiority complex which lies at the bottom of the Socialist dislike of Royalty.

Socialist Mr. Henderson, did not pay a visit to that building to assure himself of the safety of His Majesty's cousin, the Queen of Spain.¹ When Louis XVIII arrived in England as a fugitive, Canning, who was then Foreign Secretary, sent a representative of the Foreign Office to meet him, and gave orders that the municipality of Yarmouth, where the monarch was to disembark, should receive him with proper honours, for, as he said, "we ought not to let him land like a scrub."² In 1931 it was the English people, not their Socialist rulers, who displayed the national good manners towards a distinguished foreign guest.

It would be a dangerous day for the British monarchy were every other State in Europe, save Great Britain, to become a republic, and it would therefore be wise for the Crown to encourage so far as possible restorations of monarchy abroad. No doubt it is flattering to the national vanity for the Court in London to be unique, but it is perilous to the throne, for it encourages the popular superstition that in the twentieth century hereditary monarchy is an anachronism. It would do no harm if it were generally understood throughout the world that Great Britain is a definitely monarchical Power, and that while she is prepared to recognize republics when necessity arises she has no liking for the form of government which they connote. This is not, of course, that British support should be forthcoming for all and every sort of despot, or that the Royalist parties abroad should be able to rely on London in every conspiracy they undertake, but that the weight of the Empire's influence in the world should be thrown, when-

¹ Robert Sencourt: *Spain's Uncertain Crown*, p. 370. When the Empress of the French was forced to quit the Tuileries on September 4th, 1870, the Austrian and Italian ambassadors personally saw to her safety.

² Sir Charles Petric: *The Life of George Canning*, p. 54.

ever possible, on the side of hereditary monarchy. In short, monarchism must become as international as Socialism, and the more thrones there are in the world the stronger will be the position of the British Crown.

It is, at the same time, by no means easy for the monarchy to play its rightful part in the national life while a section of the press is continually, though in most cases probably quite unintentionally, making it ridiculous. Does a member of the Royal Family relax for a moment, then his or her photograph at that moment is reproduced in the papers of the following day for the delectation of millions. The camera has imposed fresh responsibilities upon all who are in public life, but particularly upon Royalty. The elaborate ceremonial with which Louis XIV passed through life was not organized by him merely to gratify his own vanity, but because he realized that the divinity which hedges Kings must have its outward and visible sign, and this purpose is hardly served by pictures of princes falling off horses, or in their shirt-sleeves.

The direct political influence of the popular press in Great Britain to-day is not extensive, and the more serious papers, with their smaller circulation, carry a great deal more weight, but the power of suggestion possessed by the former is enormous. For this reason it is highly undesirable that matters relating to Royalty should be discussed in that jocular vein which is peculiar to a certain type of British journalism: ¹ such a tone is natural in the United States, which is a republic, but it is quite out of place in Great Britain, more particularly in the columns of papers that call themselves Conservative. It is true that the British Royal Family itself is rarely subjected to treatment

¹ *E.g.*, when in August, 1932, Her Imperial and Royal Highness the Archduchess Ileana of Austria-Tuscany gave birth to a son, the London *Star* announced the fact by a poster bearing the words, "Ileana: it's a boy."

of this sort, but its foreign relatives are often held up to ridicule. "Exclusive" stories professing to relate the inside history of this or that foreign Court are by no means uncommon, and the reader is familiarized with the members of Imperial and Royal Families under such nicknames as "Little Willie" and "Foxy" Ferdinand. In reality, the private affairs of Presidents and business-men, even of newspaper proprietors themselves, are often far more lurid than those of Royalty, for few princes can show such a record as Ivar Kreuger, or have met their death in the interesting circumstances that marked the demise of Félix Faure. Yet they have not the attraction for the newspaper-reader of a scandal in which Royalty is involved, for the simple reason that the story of a monarch's shortcomings makes a subtle appeal to the inferiority complex. From the point of view of circulation, then, there is much to be said for treating Royalty in a manner which has become only too common, but in view of the Bolshevist cloud upon the horizon of European civilization the press magnate who allows his editors to print this type of article is merely sawing through the branch upon which he is himself sitting.

There are undoubtedly social conventions connected with the British Court which lend themselves to ridicule, and cannot be defended on the ground that they are essential to the creation of a monarchical atmosphere. The pageantry that is associated with Ascot is admirable, but its significance is diminished by the fact that while admission to the Royal Enclosure, which is His Majesty's private lawn, is only possible upon the production of tickets issued by the Lord Chamberlain, these tickets have to be paid for, and are by no means cheap. By all means let admission to the Royal Enclosure be limited to those who are worthy to enter the King's private grounds, but it is surely illogical, as well as unwise, to insist that in addition to other qualifications they should be the happy

possessors of a long purse. A certain amount of formality is a necessity, but it can be carried too far, and even the *Roi Soleil* never pushed it to the extreme of some of the minor German principalities of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It would be well if earlier traditions could be revived, and the presentation of *débutantes* took place a trifle more informally. A few minutes' conversation with the King on such an occasion would make a lasting impression upon a young woman, and it would be of inestimable benefit to the monarchy now that the *débutantes* are drawn from all classes, and from all parts of the Empire.

On the other hand, there is certainly no desire on the part of the British people to see the Court come to resemble that of the July Monarchy or of the Second Empire, when the provincial *bourgeoisie* and the shady financier were the chosen companions of Royalty. Indeed, when times improve, there are several of the old functions that might well be revived, for pageantry is dear to the hearts of the British, who, unlike the French, do not even mind paying for it. What is essential for the Royal Family is to avoid at all costs the impression that access to it depends upon wealth. In Great Britain there is, even among Socialists, a widespread respect for birth, and, since the war, even a tolerance for the possession of brains, but for mere money there is, outside the so-called "smart set," no reverence at all. Money gets what it will purchase, but nothing more, and it would be an evil day for the monarchy were there ever to be a suspicion that upon the size of a man's bank account depended his reception at Buckingham Palace.

Never was there greater need of the Crown as an essential part of the machinery of the Constitution than at the present time. The disruptive tendencies of years have to be counteracted, and unless the country is to relapse into the chaos from which it is slowly emerging the Constitu-

tion itself will require to be drastically overhauled. The public memory is short, and if political power in Great Britain is to continue in the hands of an irresponsible electorate, it is only a question of time (and no very long time at that) when the crisis of August, 1931, will be forgotten, and governments of the type that wasted the nation's resources for the thirteen years that followed the Armistice will again be returned to power. It is quite useless to erect some paper safeguard which would merely be swept away at the moment when it was most required; it is necessary to transform the basis upon which the political and economic system of the country rests, so that the various factors that make up the life of the nation shall have free play within such limits as will assure that the national interest is not brought into jeopardy. In short, what is necessary is the establishment, or rather re-establishment, of the Corporate State.

In any reform of this nature it will be essential to strengthen the position of the Crown. Even under the existing Constitution its powers are sufficient to enable it to play its traditional part as the nation's advocate, but owing to its dependence upon the parties it is only upon the rarest occasions that those powers can be exercised. The King must cease to be the mouthpiece of the faction that happens to be uppermost at the moment, and just as in the past the ordinary citizen looked to the throne for redress against the wrongs that he suffered at the hands of some local tyrant, so must his successor be brought to regard the Crown as his bulwark against the party politician. King George V has done much to revive this old feeling, and a great many people embarked upon the craft called National Government, not because they felt any great confidence in the officers, who had all run other ships on the rocks in the past, but because they hoped that if the weather became really bad the Royal hand would be

upon the wheel. What is wanted now is an assurance that the aid of the Crown will be forthcoming, not in the last, but in the first, resort, and that the monarch shall be able to intervene before things have reached such a stage that only a miracle can avert disaster. To secure this two modifications of existing practice would seem to be necessary: the abolition of the Civil List in its present form, and the presence of the monarch at the meetings of the Cabinet.

Until the reign of George III the revenue from the Crown lands went directly to the Crown, but that King surrendered a large portion of the revenue from them in return for a fixed annuity granted by Parliament. His successor yielded a larger portion, and the annuity was accordingly increased, but all subsequent sovereigns have, upon their accession, relinquished their claim to any portion of the hereditary revenues of the Crown, save those derived from the duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall. Prior to the reign of George III these hereditary revenues were supplemented by a Parliamentary grant calculated to produce the amount which would enable the monarch to maintain his Court, and to pay the Civil Service. It would obviously be undesirable to make the Crown again responsible for the remuneration of Civil Servants, but if it were once more to receive the hereditary revenues direct, that would strengthen its position enormously by reducing its dependence upon the House of Commons. In this case the King himself would make such allowances to the younger members of the Royal Family as he thought fit, and would defray the cost of keeping up the Royal Palaces. It is, indeed, a misfortune that the present dynasty should hold the throne, not by legitimate right, but by Act of Parliament, yet that is no reason why it should be still further weakened by owing its income also to that body.¹

¹ The latest figures show that the total sum paid to the Royal Family in a year was £576,000, and in addition there was the

It would, too, be well if the monarch resumed the old custom, abandoned at the accession of George I, of presiding at the meetings of the Cabinet. These take place so frequently now that it would probably prove impossible for the sovereign to be present at all of them, but if he took the chair once or twice a week, when the more important matters were to be discussed, that would suffice. Every interest would be served by the adoption of this procedure, for the monarch's experience, and care for the nation as a whole, would act as a corrective to the partizan fervour of the less responsible ministers, while his presence would impress upon the factions that there is a higher power in the land than themselves. To have the monarch sitting from time to time at the head of the Cabinet table would be concrete proof of the fact that the national interest is not the sum of the interests of the individuals and groups that compose it. The Corporate State, above all other forms of government, requires a strong executive, and that can best be provided in Great Britain by reviving the right of the Crown to participate in the daily working of the administration. Fortunately, the tendency in this direction has become very marked since August, 1931, and King George now gives long and frequent audiences to the ministers. It is true that he has not yet resumed the practice of presiding over the meetings of the Cabinet, but it would occasion no great surprise if he were to take this step, which would assuredly be one in the right direction.

What is true of the King applies with equal force to the other members of the Royal Family; the sooner the old tradition of active participation in the national life is re-

revenue from the Duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster, which amounted to £250,000 and £128,000 respectively. The income received from the Crown Lands during the same period was £1,300,000, and the cost of administration was approximately £10,000.

vived the better. Canning acted wisely when he made the Duke of Clarence Lord High Admiral. It is not enough for the various Princes to be associated with charitable and voluntary organizations, such as hospitals and the like; they must be substituted for the representatives of the factions in official positions. It is the fashion to take it for granted that the cadets of a dynasty must necessarily be dissipated and incompetent, but if ever anything was calculated to produce dissipation and incompetence it is the life that most of them are compelled to live. It would enormously strengthen the monarchy if there were members of the Royal Family in positions of trust, for in the hour of crisis the reigning sovereign and the country at large would be certain that the pass would not be sold by demagogues or oligarchs careful only of their own interests. It is true that they would not be proof against error any more than lesser mortals, but they would certainly be less corrupt, for they would not be responsible to an electorate whom it is always a temptation to bribe at the country's expense.

In effect, it is necessary to put an end to the state of affairs in which the Crown is a sort of legal abstraction in whose name the factions, like their predecessors in the days of the Wars of the Roses, misgovern the country to suit their own ends. The revival of the Royal power will meet tremendous opposition from those who have flourished upon its supersession, and every kind of fallacious argument, founded upon exploded democratic doctrines, will be brought forward to justify the continuance of the supremacy of Parliament. The Representative System, based upon the counting of noses, was never easy to defend upon any logical ground, but until universal suffrage was introduced it worked moderately well, and while democracy was still a novelty it proved attractive to the unthinking. Now that it has failed in such disastrous circum-

stances, the engines must be reversed. To restrict the franchise once more would be to encounter the opposition of the democratic diehards quite needlessly, for all that is necessary is, while leaving the irresponsible multitude with its votes, to ensure that the latter shall be valueless, and so powerless for harm. The parties must be deprived of the opportunity of ruining the nation by wasting its resources in bribes to the electorate, and the easiest way to do this is to introduce such reforms as shall ensure that the electorate shall cease to possess absolute power.

In the Empire the opportunities of the Crown are at least as great as in the British Isles, for without it the former would soon cease to exist. So far as the Dominions are concerned, their relations with the monarch are direct, and are no longer the concern of the Cabinet in London. The not unnatural consequence of the growth of the Dominions and of the development of the Imperial idea during the past century has been the creation of a number of constitutional anomalies, which are not easy to defend. There is a British Empire, but there is neither a British Emperor nor a British Prince Imperial. There is an Indian Empire, with an Emperor of India, but, again, without a Prince Imperial. It is true that in a State so old as Britain anomalies are not lightly to be abolished, but in the present instance they serve no useful purpose, while their disappearance would strengthen the Imperial tie, without offending the growing feeling of nationality in the Dominions. There is a tendency to stress the economic interdependence of the constituent parts of the British Empire without paying enough attention to the constitutional machinery, but if the Empire is to last its political structure must be, as it is not to-day, such as will enable it to weather the most severe of storms.

The problem is neither a new nor a specially British one. In 1783, on the morrow of the failure of Tupac Amaru,

Aranda suggested to Charles III of Spain that three kingdoms should be created in Spanish America for the Infantes, and that the King of Spain should take the title of Emperor, but the proposal was never adopted, nor was a similar one on the part of Godoy. It was felt in those days of imperfect communication that to send the Infantes to America as Kings would be but the first step in the loss by Spain of her American possessions, and that such would in all probability have been the case is proved by the subsequent separation of Brazil from Portugal in somewhat similar circumstances. In 1876, when the Royal Titles Bill was under consideration, the propriety of creating the Prince of Wales Prince Imperial of India, and his second and third brothers Princes of Canada and Australia, was discussed between the Prime Minister and Queen Victoria,¹ but the proposal was never laid before Parliament, and it was disliked by the Prince of Wales: when the latter came to the throne, however, he did consent to a modification of the previous Royal style, by assuming that of *Britanniarum Omnium Rex*.

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the objections to this somewhat clumsy expedient which were valid in 1876 also hold good to-day. The Prince of Wales might, it is true, with advantage become Prince Imperial of India, but to erect kingdoms for his younger brothers would be fraught with danger to the unity of the Empire. If the Princes, or their successors, proved a failure on their new thrones they would be deposed, to the great detriment of the monarchical principle, while if they were a success the temptation to become independent sovereigns would be too powerful to resist, encouraged as they would be by their subjects. Furthermore, with the passage of time the tie between, say, Canberra and London would be weaker instead of stronger as the Kings of Australia became the

¹ G. E. Buckle: *Life of Benjamin Disraeli*, vol. v, p. 466.

second, third, and fourth cousins of the British Emperor. It would be the story of the great feudatories over again, and the centrifugal influences in the British Empire were proved by the Ottawa Conference to be strong enough already without receiving added encouragement of this nature. The Crown is the one unifying force that exists, and it would be an irretrievable blunder to allow it to become a factor of disunion by encouraging the ambitions of the younger members of the Royal Family.

A far better way of employing the Crown to further the unity of the Empire would be to create the King of England British Emperor,¹ and at the same time to erect the Dominions into kingdoms, each of which the Emperor would rule under a different title: thus the present King would be styled "King George V, British Emperor, King of England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India." Those parts of the Empire which had not been constituted kingdoms would take the oath of allegiance to the British Emperor, and the Prince of Wales would become Prince Imperial everywhere save in England, where his present title would continue to be used. This arrangement would not necessitate any save a technical alteration in the present system, since the Governors-General would merely become Viceroys, and would represent the King of Canada, Australia, etc., instead of the King of England. Indeed, so far as Canada is concerned, the possible erection of that Dominion into a kingdom has been seriously discussed more than once, and a Bill for that purpose has been brought forward in the Canadian Parliament, so that the proposal is in no sense a novelty.

It is not difficult to see how such a solution as this would both enhance the prestige of the Crown, and would ensure

¹ Cf. Hugh Selson: *Whither, England?* pp. 288-289.

that the growing feeling of nationality in the Dominions did not become a menace to the unity of the Empire. Even in the case of Ireland it is by no means improbable that a solution may ultimately be found along these lines. The Royal Family has never been unpopular in that country, and had Queen Victoria paid a quarter of the attention to Ireland that she paid to Scotland¹ (above all, had she created another Balmoral there) it is almost certain that many of the troubles of the last hundred years would have been avoided. The revival of the ancient kingdom of Ireland would make a strong appeal to Irishmen, and the oath of allegiance could then be taken, both in Dublin and in Belfast, to King George V as King of Ireland. Until the passions of the present moment had abated somewhat there would be no need to disturb the existing arrangement, for although this would be a definite anomaly only the most unconscionable of pedants would take exception to anomalies where the government of human beings is concerned. It may unfortunately prove the case that the time has, through a lack of imagination on the part of the politicians, gone by when such a solution was practicable, but what is clear is that sooner or later the Irish Question, which has baffled every British statesman who has tried to settle it, must be faced, and that no attempt has even been made to utilize the Crown to this end.

The economic trend of the past decade has been all in the direction of the larger unit, just as the political settlement that was made after the last war was based upon the opposite principle: indeed, it is to the conflict between the reality of political nationalism and the need for

¹ "During her reign the Queen spent less than five weeks in Ireland, but her visits to Scotland covered almost seven years." H. Bolitho: *Albert the Good*, p. 118. Cf. also Earl of Middleton: *Ireland, Dupe or Heroine?* pp. 90-91.

economic cosmopolitanism that many of the evils which have lately afflicted mankind must be attributed. However this may be, within the British Empire there are few sections of opinion which are not prepared to agree upon the absolute necessity of bringing its constituent parts together, and the difference is rather as to the means than as to the end. It is generally conceded that one of the strongest links of Empire must be the economic, for the vision of Imperial Federation, which seemed so real twenty years ago, has now vanished completely. Man, however, does not live by bread alone, and the British Empire of the future will be a poor thing if it is to be held together by no tighter bond than that of self-interest. In the last resort it is the higher appeal that stirs humanity, and the fabric of the Empire cannot be permanently supported upon columns of statistics.

An Imperial abstraction is not enough to hold together people of different races, occupations, and creeds scattered all over the world; there must be a more personal tie, and that can only be the Crown. It is true that in the future the weight of responsibility which will be thrown upon the monarchy will be enormous, for the sovereign himself, and his immediate relatives, will be under the continual necessity of travelling round the Empire. Yet, even so, this will be but to revert to an earlier tradition, for the conception of the monarch as more or less permanently resident in the capital is relatively new. In the Middle Ages Kings and Queens were continually moving about, and it is as easy, as well as it is as quick, to get from London to Ottawa now as it was from London to York then. Had communications not improved, the development of the Dominions would eventually have resulted in their independence, just as happened in the case of the Spanish Vice-Royalties in America a century ago: now there is no need to envisage such a future, provided that

the Empire's rulers realize that there are other factors in the working of a State than the purely material.

If the problem of strengthening the links that hold together the constituent parts of the Empire is one of the great questions of the day, the collapse of democracy in Great Britain itself is another of equal importance. It is true that since the General Election of 1931 scant attention has been paid to this, but with the passage of time the problem will assuredly become more pressing, for it has not been permanently solved by the election of a House of Commons in which the opposition has been reduced to a handful. The Englishman has a rooted dislike of facing political facts, but sooner or later he will have to face them, and, as has already been suggested, the Constitution will have to be emended in such a way as will neutralize the excesses attendant upon universal suffrage. At the same time, it will be opposed to the whole national tradition to produce a brand-new Constitution, and it is on every ground undesirable that the Corporate State should make its appearance in this way; rather must it be worked into the old order, of which the Crown is still the outstanding institution. Under cover of the monarchy did political democracy gain its first, and under cover of the monarchy it must lose its last, hold upon the Constitution.

It is clear that no King of England will again be able to govern the country as Elizabeth governed it—that is to say, like a squire manages his estate: administration has become too complicated for that even in Great Britain itself, without taking the Empire overseas into account, and any attempt to revert to this tradition would only result in such governmental paralysis as characterized the last years of Philip II of Spain. What is rather required is that the King should play the part of the chairman in one of the larger industrial undertakings. When all goes well there is no need for him to do a great deal, but when a

crisis does come he must be prepared to see that it is the national interest that is served. Under the present Constitution it would not be easy for the monarch to act as he should without arraying the factions against him in the name of that very liberty which they have done so much to destroy, and this is an added reason for the adoption of the Corporate System in which every factor in the national life, including the Crown, can be utilized in the national interest.

Finally, the British monarchy will, amid the changes that the coming years must bring if the nation and the Empire are to survive, continue to incarnate the national tradition. It is older than Parliament, and, if the English people are wise, it will continue to flourish after Parliament has been changed out of all recognition, the symbol of the immortality of the British race.

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